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## IOWA CENTENNIAL HISTORY

*Projected by the State Historical Society of Iowa and approved by the General Assembly, volumes of history commemorative of the establishment of the State of Iowa in 1846 are being compiled and published as rapidly as financial support permits.*



I dedicate to the memory of my father, Thomas W. Parker, and my mother, Eliza Ann Kirk, this study of a great movement in which it was their privilege to bear an active and true part. They knew its trials, partook of its pleasures, saw its large significance, and left to me, their only and grateful son, a supreme sense of obligation for their service to the world as typical representatives of the best traditions of the American Pioneer.

G. F. P.





# *Iowa* ~~~~~ *Pioneer Foundations*

By  
GEORGE F. PARKER

VOL. II



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THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA

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## THIS BOOK

PERHAPS the most thorough and comprehensive work ever written and published on the Pioneer, this book along with volume one contributes to Iowa and American history the foundations upon which were builded the commonwealths of Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Michigan, Wisconsin, as well as Iowa.

Of this great wheel of Midwestern States, Iowa is the hub. Here Pioneer life came to its final fruition. The period covered by the author (1830 to 1870) illustrates the movements, ideas, impulses, motives, activities, and achievements of the American Pioneer at their highest.

The author lived in Iowa many years. He was intimately acquainted with the Pioneers as of his own group of people. Accordingly his information came largely from his own personal experiences, observations, and conversations with scores of Pioneers. These pages are the result of a lifetime of observation and intense thinking.

Before the death of Mr. Parker in May, 1928, the manuscript for the two volumes was placed in the custody of the State Historical Society of Iowa with the request that it be published as written without additions or deletions. With the exception of a few changes in punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing, the work is printed as it came to the Society some years ago from the hands of the author. The original manuscript will be preserved

## This Book

among the collections of the State Historical Society at Iowa City.

There may be readers who do not agree with some of the statements made in the pages of this book. This would not be surprising since there are few if any readers who were eye witnesses of the life of the Pioneers (1830-1870) as covered by Mr. Parker who wrote from his own personal experiences. Since the editor could not discuss any points with the author, he has left practically all statements stand as they are found in the original manuscript.

BENJ. F. SHAMBAUGH

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT AND EDITOR  
STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA  
IOWA CITY IOWA

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*THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE*



## ELEMENTS IN CURRENT LIFE

LET it be assumed that the whole of a given population has pulled up its roots elsewhere; that its individual units have been drawn from many sources and have settled upon their own lands in new homes; that they have accepted the laws and regulations which they find or bring, and have added some simple adaptations to meet new needs; that they have inherited or developed an industrial organization; that their forms of religion have become so dovetailed that all can freely worship in the way that may best suit them; and that they have devised and put into operation a system of education that meets their needs. All these elements concurring, the rest of their duties and work must consist of an harmonious adjustment to new surroundings and to themselves as individuals and classes. These things may fairly be defined as their social structure : made up of the infinite details which do not easily lend themselves to accurate classification.

Such a title will naturally include both the specific and the general; but no man could make it wholly comprehensive. The individual acts and tastes, the formation, modification, or extension of the family life, the methods of working and of living, the manners, the recognition of the amenities or their spread, the attitude towards lot or position in the human scheme, how they find and follow leaders or principles, their relation to culture, learning,



## Pioneer Foundations

and those qualities of mind or heart that lie outside physical or material needs or wants, and what, after these things have been done, is to be their opinion of each other as shown in the ramifying associations they have formed — all must be deemed a part of their collective life.

Such a task cannot be faced with light-hearted confidence. So many of these manners, customs, methods are traditional : the perpetuation of habits, formed long before and actively in operation through many human scenes : to assume them to have any element of novelty would be little less than preposterous. To expect that distinctively new qualities or habits should develop upon an area bearing only a small relation to the organized life of which it is a part, even in one great country, to say nothing of humanity in general, is unreasonable.

Changes are not the work of years but of centuries. The student is, therefore, thrown back upon the necessity of dealing with much that is merely a series of automatic episodes which, surviving into this life in new physical surroundings so excites wonder because of its universality, that he is entitled to ask whether anything in man, except the individual human body, ever really dies. It emphasizes the conclusion, old when the ages were young, that there is nothing new under the sun.

### THE FAMILY AS THE FOUNDATION

1. THE primary, central fact of this life was the family — the American family as modified by the peculiar conditions and experiences through which it had then been

## The Family as Foundation

passing for nearly two hundred years. The patriarchal, feudal, and monastic systems had come, exercised their influence, and, so far as it is possible with anything human, had disappeared. The key idea was the protection of the weak by the strong whether with its accepted head (the father) who stood guard in his turn and his way, or the mother whose sheltering arms were open to receive and nourish her own. This family was the perfected fruit of that liberty which had been so long in coming. It was not measured by rights or their assertion; in its later stages it was the slow growth of changes under the influence of Christianity.

2. In this family there was equality in responsibility; normally, within the lines of age and strength, there were no exemptions. The man and the woman were bound in both custom and conscience to labor, and each child was expected at an early age to take up those employments which brought or promised economic independence and fixed its place in the scheme of life. If these social edicts were disregarded, disobeyed, or neglected, the punishment was as automatic as it was certain. This equality of responsibility was not based consciously upon the edict pronounced in the Garden of Eden, terrible as it has always been assumed to be.

Whatever the Pioneer may have professed either in name or reality, labor was not a curse; it was a duty and, in the climate where he found himself, a necessity. It was not the same for all without regard to sex. While the industrial revolution had destroyed this industry or that

## Pioneer Foundations

series of employments for woman and had banished them to the factory, one after another, it had not driven her as in some countries to work on the land. More and more she had been drawn into the seclusion of the home where her dominion was supreme, and yet her relations to the farm, her place in the division of its work and rewards, were as clearly defined as that of the man.

3. Out of the family, and inextricably intertwined with it, came the individual with his duties and their resulting obligations. There was no other force with which he could deal. There was no State, no organized social machinery, upon which within the limits of his own independence he could call. He had either to accept the labor and the discipline that awaited him and do his allotted part, or he was nothing.

4. But while this was an associative life it was never communal. It was, therefore, though its members scarcely knew it, the beneficiary and the victim of individual and social heredity and of its sequence: natural selection. Nominally, all families and all individuals in them were the same; in reality, they were seamed and stratified with natural and artificial distinctions in a way quite as marked as in the social and political systems which they condemned and fondly hoped to banish from the world.

5. Out of these fundamental elements, none of them new, but working together on strange scenes where their coöperation would earlier have seemed impossible, was created this social atmosphere of the Pioneer. It was little

## The Family as Foundation

complicated by what would then have been called foreign or outside manners, habits, customs, modes of thought or action — although we now know that they were universal, not racial or national, products. The assimilation of Anglo-Saxon ideas (this term while misleading is popular and thus fairly capable of understanding) to these rough environments had been so complete that practically nothing else was known. While the population affected would have resented the assumption that they were as English as the English themselves had been when the first migrations were made, they were never able to escape from their origin. Even when foreign strains were introduced, so strong was this racial heredity that nothing could do more than modify it; to eradicate, or even seriously change it, was impossible.

6. On this culminating Pioneer scene, the social conditions (those methods of thought and action which control men) were inevitably survivals from a series of Pioneer communities that spread themselves over a protracted period during which effective settlement had been under way in Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio, Indiana, Missouri, and Illinois and, to a modified extent, in Michigan and Wisconsin. As population of varied origins met on these training grounds, there were gradually developed characteristics not prominent in any one of the sources. But it would probably puzzle even the most zealous and industrious researcher to find anything new all along this line; although it would not be difficult to discover the revival of a great number of things that had been lost upon the older line of march.

## Pioneer Foundations

### FREQUENT CHANGES OF SCENE

I HAVE constantly emphasized the fact that this Pioneer life, seeming to be so much a thing apart, was, after all, nothing but a continuation of other scenes, a survival of the methods and ideas that had fought their way through a rough and unfriendly coast line; over mountains of which almost nothing was known; on into plains whose natural fertility being wholly beyond knowledge was equally raised above their imagination; and that every mile of their march was made in spite of the hostility of red men and through a forest that resisted their advance at every step. I have insisted, almost to exaggeration, that the men fated to conduct this long new adventure, covering three generations of men, were not weak and ignorant, throwing themselves into the world for the sake of idle adventure with its inevitable suffering and hardships, or for mere existence, and that they were not composed of educated dreamers going out from comfortable surroundings as incurable idealists.

It should be recognized that in no place and at no time in history have men with a settled social position at home and with either inherited or acquired mental culture emigrated in such numbers that they could at once set up an old and delicate way of living in a new environment. In spite of all claims, this was not true originally in Virginia, New England, New York, Pennsylvania, Canada, or Florida. There have been in all of them the representatives of families enjoying at home some of these cultural advantages; but they bore so small a ratio to the whole

## Escape from Curse of Slavery

that everywhere the little leaven has had too much to do to leaven the lump. That it has succeeded in some measure is due to the fact that among the men drawn into this swift current there was a number sufficient in the mass to maintain and extend the traditions and character left behind them.

### *ESCAPE FROM THE CURSE OF SLAVERY*

IN THE southern colonies, from which so large a proportion of the Pioneers drew their motive and their representatives, the laws of primogeniture and entail were discarded at an early day, but not before the Western movement had reached its initial stages. This gave an impetus which, though not overwhelming, turned migration into something larger and more far-seeing than the desire for personal adventure. It also made it impossible to perpetuate a rural gentry like that which had laid the foundations and built up the colonies of Virginia and Maryland. Out of these had already come a large proportion of men of a lofty type and fairly adapted to the new surroundings that were to make them a strong force in the resulting development.

The systems of landholding and labor had changed although the fact is clear that even Virginia was not made by the work of slaves, whether white or black. The number of negroes was so small, they were so wild and inefficient, that analysis would probably show for the first century of black labor a cost much greater than the return from it. The men who in the early days of Virginia built

## Pioneer Foundations

ships and docks, developed a foreign trade, felled timber, cleared forests, and created an industry in a product wholly new, organized political and social life and thus began and carried on a great experiment, were both white and free.

The character of American development, as well as that of the men who had made it, was as firmly fixed in 1619 when the first handful of blacks were landed in Virginia as it is now. Few deductions in the annals of men are clearer than that as a race the negro was the same drawback, even from the lowest economic point of view, from the moment he set foot on the continent of America as from the conditions which outside his initiative or fault but inside his unchangeable character he has always been. The curse, the inherent iniquity of permanent slavery, did not come solely from its injustice to the negro — serious as this was — but also from its enervating and destructive effects upon the white. The black race so far as it has been made at all — in America or elsewhere — is the product of that system which taking it out of abject savagery has given it a language and by reason of its own powers of mimicry has enabled it to take on the semblance of civilization. The strength of the new movement to the westward lay in the fact that it afforded the white man an effective escape from this blight and gave him a real chance to assert himself.

### *A RURAL GENTRY COULD NOT BE PERPETUATED*

It was impossible in these new surroundings to perpetuate a rural gentry like that from which after more than a

## Rural Gentry Could Not Be Perpetuated

century and a half in Virginia had come a peculiar society with many leaders of a high order. In this tedious progress to the westward the system of landholding had changed; but the men were of exactly the same type, offshoots from the same origins, even from the same families with the same self-reliance and independence and a like inherent capacity for leadership. And yet, few of these men had held large areas of land or could have used them with advantage to purse or position. Such holdings were no longer necessary for social standing but neither here nor anywhere else, could men command influence without individual ownership of land.

The whole West was both made and ruled by the average farmer. Even the lawyer and the doctor generally had a stake in the land, as did the local banker or man of business who came into anything resembling recognition. Perhaps nothing so weakened the clergy as the absence of this direct participation in the dominating industry. It was believed almost instinctively that no man could understand the motives and the character of the farmer unless in some form or other he was actually interested through ownership. From the beginning this unconscious free-masonry, growing naturally out of the unity of origin and purpose, was one of the striking features of the life of the whole Pioneer region.

The people of the original colonies were bound together by a great number of influences. They had special reciprocal products for which each must seek a distant market; they had war, Indians, differences with the Mother Coun-



## Pioneer Foundations

try, religious intolerance and persecution; a sterile soil; diverse attachments drawing them to both the old and the new; while the Pioneers, compelled to overcome natural difficulties no less serious, had to fall back upon themselves for association. Each colony had long since fairly assimilated its people to their environment while the new West, drawing from these various sources, had to do this work for itself and in its own way. Out of so many possible leaders, where outward or artificial qualifications had been lost, there was a constant search for the right man for each task or position but it would have been as futile for any man to think that the ownership of a thousand acres of land would confer any distinction as it would have been to hope so to cultivate it as to produce an economic return.

Whatever may have been the extent of individual holdings there was no shading of responsibility. As men by their own efforts made their places by working with their hands, they could do nothing else with any fitness for leadership that they might develop than to make it appear in what they did. The passion for laying field to field scarcely existed; but if success on a small scale came, the process of expansion involved unremitting industry, prudence, modesty of demeanor, and a manly attitude towards neighbors. No man was quicker to resent anything like airs or patronage than the average farmer of the times, none recognized with more generosity the merits of a neighbor, but he did require that the resulting superiority should be demonstrated, not asserted or assumed.

The motto, *noblesse oblige*, having its origin in the

## Rural Gentry Could Not Be Perpetuated

obligation to behave honorably and generously as imposed by position or birth could not find the same order of illustration in this life and was practically unknown in formal outward expression; but, in the reality of its meaning, in effect upon motive and action, it was probably never found in greater degree than among these men, each dependent upon his personal labor, almost wholly manual, for success.

Pride was as much in evidence as in more settled forms of society. While it was not expressed by formal exclusiveness it was none the less effective and was passed down the line with a persistency as great as if it had belonged to some settled aristocracy long fixed by law and custom. It was not assertive and neither had nor needed formulation into words; it was, nevertheless, as much an inheritance as completely recognized as if the old words, gentleman and lady, had been daily defined and exhibited their formal living representatives flaunted before the world with all the vanity inseparable from settled castes. It was the thing itself, and the maintenance of its standard, that were both important and vital : not the name or form.

It was, in fact, a quality of the mass more than of the individual. Men of ideas and substance living in distant townships or neighborhoods knew each other by instinct as belonging to the type which never varied over the fifteen hundred miles and the years running into centuries, thus separating the end of the journey from its beginning. They had nothing to learn about each other except to meet and know that there was work to be done and that it was incumbent upon them to find out where and what

## Pioneer Foundations

it was in order that they might do it. They were assimilated in origin, sufferings, and outlook. If their physical horizon was restricted, the same religion, language, and institutions were theirs in common and in spite of limitations and by reason of their character they were still led on. A man or woman to whom these were foreign was lost however wise or successful outwardly : their very presence was akin to a strange insoluble body in a chemical combination.

### THE LEADERS IN DEVELOPMENT

THE POWER to do his work did not come to the Pioneer by accident; nor was it the product of the new theories then propounded as the result of the increase of population, the development of material resources, or the violent political and industrial floods which in the last quarter of the eighteenth century threatened to submerge two continents. It was an inheritance from all that had gone before : an inheritance which no wild, impossible idea of equality could destroy or affect. Since the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species* there has been much discussion of theories back of the reality of heredity and an assumption that the thing itself was something new to human thought; but the people who for more than a century made their way over mountains and through the wilderness until they came to the prairie and then passed over and into it knew better; they saw this heredity constantly before their eyes as a concrete fact. It was impossible by any deception to make them believe that thorns grew on fig-trees, or that

## The Leaders in Development

a silk purse could be made from a sow's ear. However sparse the population, however serious the difficulties and hardships, or however much the society about them might seem to be a mere jumble, they saw that the better the origin the better the man, and that quite uniformly he must do the constructive work whether in the fortune of the time its texture was coarse or fine.

This man adjusted himself to his surroundings; he had to be an intelligent and enterprising citizen; the leader, less individually than collectively, in religious and educational agencies; he must plough a straighter furrow and effectively cultivate more land; he had to cut and handle more timber; and, as the industrial leader in his own neighborhood, he could be trusted to find and introduce and sometimes to devise the best machinery. If, by chance, this type of man was missing anywhere (he sometimes failed for a time to appear, effectively, in small areas) nothing could be done until he was found. He was not always the richest or the most prosperous, but he was certain to make his influence felt even in a material way. Often such a man or family would emerge but slowly from the crude surrounding activities. Sometimes a family of this type would seem to be submerged for a generation or so; but, in the long run its members were pretty sure to rise out of the ordinary ruck and take their natural places. Nor did luck or favorable environment produce the winning qualities: these must exist as part of the inherent gifts which no kind of misfortune could permanently repress. There were few forces or elements to interfere with

## Pioneer Foundations

this survival of the fittest. Even the terrible climatic extremes, the zymotic diseases whose mortality was little relieved by adequate medical treatment, the grinding physical toil, the persistence of an unbending individualism that gave neither help nor sympathy until they were earned, the mediocrity and pretension that obtruded themselves on every hand, the truculent political spirit from which there was no escape, the primitive industrial organization — nothing could keep down families that had the stuff in them or elevate above the commonplace those without it. One class produced the order of families which seldom failed; out of the other came those who could hardly hope to command any success that added permanently to the achievements of the mass.

### FUTILITY OF INHERITED PROPERTY

So, too, the common talk about property enabling men to pass over or extinguish these indelible social lines in a population, whether new or old, is most misleading. The fact is that the type next below had more acquisitive power. It retained its ingrained provident qualities and the willingness to live on the poorest of its products because the best would command a higher price; its lack of interest in the education of its heavier, more stolid children, its want of taste or pride, and the absence of public spirit all contributed to give this class an artificial position for a time. Among them was always found the man who boasted that he was self-made — a boast that, if true, generally reflected upon his creator. In reality there is

## Futility of Inherited Property

no such creature in all the categories of mankind. If men are at their best, or are doing work for which they have both call and training, they are of God's making; if they are neither, if they disregard all laws or morals, seeking to push through as a strong animal crashes its way into or out of a jungle or across a river, the brazen assumption running through our history and life that such masks of men are vital or creative is as misleading as it is false.

It is everywhere true that if men are not honestly doing their best, even in narrow material surroundings, then whatever the seeming ability or position may be there is no real place for them in the world's larger councils. It is true that greatly to the hurt of the world large numbers of pushing men, devoid of the real instincts and power needed in a crisis with little of training and less of capacity for contributing to the larger destinies, did so clog the wheels as to make progress difficult; but it was only when they had failed that the real leaders with inborn moral strength could come to the front to save or make a situation.

It was because of these needs that the Pioneer cannot be confused with the immigrant. The latter was a follower, a gleaner. It was less that he came into his new environment without an idea of the work that was to be done than that he was incapable of a creative act. In order to paint a scene or reproduce a figure the artist must first see it : when his imagination carries him further he understands and reveals things that others neither see nor suspect. In the case of the Pioneer, he was the product of generations of intelligent reliance, coupled with insight,

## Pioneer Foundations

training for his task in body, eye, and mind, while the immigrant and his forebears who were only peasant in type had been submerged in the commonplace.

All this but demonstrates that it is not mere working ability that was involved. It was the power so to direct or deflect work that if it was manual it should also be spiritual, with a capacity for creation and for putting behind it such vision that whatever its nature it was enabled to look beyond itself into its effects. This power is as distinctly heritable\* as physical, mental, or moral characteristics or qualities. This was the gift that the true Pioneer needed and had, and the result is a monument to his power to see as well as to his work.

Perhaps the most important of this man's natural gifts, the result of his admixture of blood, his close association with all the human elements about him, and his familiarity with its ideas and aspirations as well as with the trades that made up its industries, gave him gradually — as a new faculty, almost a new sense — the insight to understand and the power to mould so far as possible the very immigrant with whom in increasing almost overwhelming numbers he was finally fated to deal into his own way of thought and action and an outward show of success.

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\* Charles Darwin to Francis Galton, December 3, 1869 : "You have made a convert of an opponent in one sense, for I have always maintained that, excepting fools, men did not differ much in intellect, only in zeal and hard work; and I still think this is an eminently important difference." The rejoinder that might be made to his remark about hard work, is that character, including the aptitude for work, is heritable like every other faculty. — Galton's *Memories of My Life* (1908), pp. 290, 291.

## Application to the Pioneer Area

### APPLICATION TO THE PIONEER AREA

SO FAR, however, as our period is concerned the development was as distinctly American as anything could be, no less in the individuals who constituted the leaders and the led of this movement than in the ideas and aspirations that drove them forward. Nor were this man's activities and achievements local either in inspiration or application. From the time that he crossed the rivers or mountains into the great watershed which separated him from his place of origin on the coast, until he had fulfilled his mission, he was moved by the same desires and ambitions. He proceeded as the same independent, constructive, bold, almost truculent, character that he was in the beginning. From the day in 1769 that, leading a small band of adventurers into Tennessee and Kentucky, he started on his journey he was the same man whether he wrought in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Michigan, or Wisconsin, until in 1833 he crossed the Mississippi River into Iowa and later braved the cold in Minnesota. The period from the beginning of the first serious movement to the like stage of the last covered only two generations in time; in the interval he had either conquered, or put into operation, forces and movements that were to result in the conquest of 522,774 square miles of the most fertile land on the globe. The Pioneer population had constituted one new local government after another, all based upon the same ideas and models as the originals, with like laws, aspirations, and peoples.



## Pioneer Foundations

Only by such a character could an empire have been created in so brief a period, and that, too, with only one battle fought upon its soil that was decisive either of a principle or possession. When done it was a single realm within an empire already existing. No serious attempt had been made anywhere to set up an independent government by the mass, without the display of any commanding personal ambition, and it must be confessed with only a single man coming to the front as the fairly representative and natural leader of the whole. His power was created and exercised on scenes comparatively small, under the aegis and for the benefit of all; but other than Andrew Jackson, who never forgot his origin, or the past which made possible all this growth or the close relation which the great movement bore to the whole, no man arose within this entire area and period who showed even the possibility of large leadership or domination. His ambitions and power growing with age and responsibility only linked him the closer to the elements and forces out of which this development had come. The Oriental practice of a satrap robbing the people he was sent to govern with the sole purpose of setting up a government for himself had no place at any time in the scheme of the American Pioneer. This shows that even with increasing numbers a unity had come, which operating under a great faith, had bound men together outside of cruelty, misgovernment, or unrestrained power, and had become so strong that it could use them for what they deemed commanding purposes.

## The Low Order of Population

### THE LOW ORDER OF POPULATION

NO CONTRAST could be more marked than the descent from the order of men just considered to the population that followed them, like driftwood in the wake of a ship. It, too, was found everywhere and probably in numbers as large or larger than the best, the great majority lying in between them. The origin of these people has already been indicated in the brief account that was necessary to describe how they came to follow on. It is not, therefore, necessary further to analyze them. What they had been they remained to the end as unchangeable as the Sphinx. As the enterprising class were the beneficiaries of heredity, both collectively and individually, so its foil, with the exception of this lowest class, were the victims of the same unseen and indefinable force.

It cannot be forgotten that the very existence of this product (the most curious and pathetic ever seen in American surroundings) is generally denied. The assumption is so general as to be almost universal that no such element is possible in our life. We have been so well satisfied, because in the plenitude of nature's bounty there seems to be a place for the starving, the hungry, the depraved, or the useless among the descendants of our original population that for a long time until it became a fixed tradition we preferred to believe that our crime, pauperism, poverty, and misery were imported; that nobody other than foreigners had qualified themselves for admission to jails, poorhouses, and indecent resorts. It was so easy to exaggerate our boasted lack of cities and thus to assume

## Pioneer Foundations

that rural life had in it none of these pests; and then to conclude that our institutions, including our doctrine of equality, left no place for such classes.

But, as already described, such people not only came in fairly large proportions; they stayed, multiplied, and the further they went the more useless they became. Instead of improving as did everything and everybody about them, the further they penetrated into the wilderness the less chance they had of struggling out of their slough of despond. No new country where all must work has any place in it for the idle and the inefficient. Such a people may hide away in their own misery among a city population, or even in old, highly-organized, rural communities where each man having his place, knows it, and keeps it. In these the mass enables the individual to stand up, but in the Pioneer conditions they have no props.

The Pioneer was hospitable to the unfortunate and sympathetic beyond any ordinary limit; but he could not abide the idle and thriftless. Here again he took a Pauline text ("if any will not work neither shall he eat") and turned it into something quite as mandatory and literal as if it had been a commandment. The verdict was uniform: "Laziness is not a disease, not a misfortune; it is a crime." While the old custom of dealing severely with vagrants had passed into disuse because the penalties never repaid the trouble or wrought the hoped-for improvement, the mass of industrious families in each community were quite of one mind in going about their own business with as little regard as possible to this type of fellowman.

## Feeling of Contempt for These People

They were a nuisance in the schools from which they could not be excluded as a right; but filthiness of bodily habit and squalor of surroundings placed them so nearly in the Pariah class that few were permitted to send their children regularly into association with those of their decent neighbors. If there was no real reason for their exclusion, some sufficient excuse would be found; even these precautions were seldom necessary as they did not present themselves persistently before a teacher. They were ignorant to the lowest degree; and in 1857 in Iowa, when the principal issue in the new constitution then voted upon was the enlargement and perfection of the common school system, they united with the more greedy among the mediocre, well-to-do population and many of the childless in opposition to free schools: in every community where these elements were found the active, enterprising friends of free education were compelled to rally with extra efforts to overcome this opposition.

### FEELING OF CONTEMPT FOR THESE PEOPLE

BUT THE strongest force in dealing with this ineffably low class was the universal contempt in which they were held. From one end of the Pioneer area to the other, and in all the stages of its development, these people were practically outlaws from decent society. Wherever slavery existed, as it did for a time over a part of this area, the term "poor white" was applied to these people by the negroes themselves. However, the one descriptive word that came most into use was "ornery". Derived reputably from "ordinary",

## Pioneer Foundations

the latter was obsolete as an epithet for an individual. Nobody without actual knowledge of the period can form any conception of the contempt, unfathomable and irredeemable, which this word could express. It became one of those rich forms of dialect which in this as in so many other cases overlay their originals. There was no undue measure of profanity in the vocabulary of the Pioneer; but it was nearly always excused even by the most careful or religious when applied as an epithet to one of these perverted specimens of humanity.

During the past few years much attention has been given to the study of the ill social effects arising from the presence of given types of individuals in the history of certain districts. The best known of these was *The Jukes* by Richard Dugdale, in which a Hudson River family by this assigned name was analyzed. In each of the Pioneer States making up the Middle West there were probably at least fifty villages containing Jukes families, sometimes singly, often in groups of from two to five. Once in a while one lived in the village proper; but for the most part they were clustered in the woods roundabout where they squatted in miserable hovels sometimes built for them, oftener the deserted huts where some settler had perhaps sheltered himself from a stormy winter while building a comfortable cabin and awaiting the arrival of his family in the spring.

For the most part, the heads of these families were women without the accompanying inconvenience at any

## Feeling of Contempt for These People

time in their lives of a husband but with a plentiful, never absent brood of dirty, miserable children whose series of vagrant fathers lined up along the route of the miserable mother's slow march from her native place. Her daughters followed her example, early and often; her sons became useless vagabonds, with relapses into petty thievery, on the way to jail and, not infrequently, into exile or hanging by a patient but watchful vigilance committee.

The presence of such elements created in the countryside a slum nowise better in character, type, or method, than its city congener whether in Whitechapel, the dirty ill-kept manufacturing villages or cities of England, Scotland, or Ireland, the notorious old Five Points in New York, or the overcrowded tenements of Berlin and Paris. Its inhabitant was a natural slum dweller though generally without even the disgraceful picturesqueness to be found in such places. Thus, the descendants of the transported thieves and wantons of the seventeenth century wreaked their revenges and found their predestined places in the midst of the most wholesome surroundings, and among a people simple in tastes and manners, there to follow their inherited trade of scattering poison, disease, and death as they made their way still farther to the westward, or went anywhere, forward or back, in the vain attempt to get away from the shadow of their own misery.\*

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\* A very good description of the poor white at one of the points of his travels will be found in Julia Henderson Levering's *Historic Indiana*, pp. 359-361.

## Pioneer Foundations

### *THE MASS LYING BETWEEN*

IT WILL not be necessary to analyze anew the mass of the population which stood in between these types; the men both creative and dominant, who demanded analysis, and those at the bottom who deserved (if original contribution to the task in hand were a real reason for such analysis) next to no notice at all. This middle class is sometimes confused, especially by the demagogue, with what is called the common people as really representing the entire mass. When an attempt is made to separate any class from this whole, violence is done to the law of averages. If, on the one hand, those in the middle were taken as a whole there would be no leadership, and, on the other hand, few human problems.

These midway people were just this commonplace mass — neither more nor less. They were industrious and frugal, and did their duty as they saw it. Among them stood the social Jacob's ladder upon which were some families going up, slowly making their way under many difficulties, to independence and through it to culture and position; and other families, for whom, going down, down, down in the scale, there was little hope. The great majority, in the way that majorities have, stood still, solid in their integrity and character, taking life with a fair measure of philosophy without indulging ambitions though equipped with a fair supply of aspirations. Leaders seldom came out of it so that it probably never so recruited those above as fully to requite the latter's leakage. It took the education it could get and was as thankful as it knew how to

## Confusion With Other Classes

be; it accepted the religion it found and asked no questions; it worked with honesty and fidelity doing little to improve methods or rewards and adjusted itself to the form of government and institutions under which it lived, without asking awkward questions of those at the top, or troubling itself about those down below.

No population could have been more patient under hardship, or more inured to suffering. In short, it did its work as the part of the people to which it belonged, never shirking duties or tending to take itself too seriously. It was conservative so far as its limitations permitted it to answer an intelligent appeal to its patriotism or to its sense of public honor.

### CONFUSION WITH OTHER CLASSES

THE HUMAN outcasts described should not be confused with the class known as mountain whites who, scattered over the South as descendants of early Scotch-Irish and Scotch settlers, have so maintained their character that whenever opportunity knocks at their door — however long she may delay her coming — they welcome her. These people are poor in property but rich in character and native ability, bringing to bear upon their own regeneration and the service of their country a wholesomeness that belongs to them as it did to their ancestors. They are the real victims of black slavery which has to atone for no weightier sin than its long repression of ability and strong qualities in a people whose associates and fellows, under happier auspices though no better or in any way different from



## Pioneer Foundations

them, have been one of the richest of all the human mines worked in the settlement of this country. Neither should any intelligent or thoughtful reader permit himself to believe that men like Andrew Jackson, Abraham Lincoln\*, and many others who have come out of the unfavorable surroundings of the Pioneer life, belonged to such a class. In no known case is there any difficulty in tracing to industrious God-fearing people the origin of any man who has thus come out: whereas there is no attested instance where real men have emerged from the polluted sources of the genuine poor white. No assumption of altruism, no pre-election demagoguery, no sentimental wail of the uplifter, no amount of gush, can get away from these facts, terrible though they may be.

There are no returns from which an estimate of the proportions of these various types can be made. Perhaps the statistics of illiteracy would furnish a rough basis so far as the North was concerned, but even these would be unfair, both up and down. There were many worthy families the heads of which could not read and write; they

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\* We are not, then, dealing with some slum product of a modern city in which perhaps a thin and disordered blood, an obscure and starved ancestry and parentage, the helpless, hopeless, pauperism of uncounted generations of idleness and uselessness, of vice and crime, are to be considered. We have to do with one drawn from the strong, virile race of men who, shirking no duty, lived out of doors, hewed and plowed, or sowed and reaped their way to physical and mental health, and, being the best, survived all the perils of savages, of flood and rude travel, of fevers and the hard conditions incident to obedience to the command to be fruitful, replenish the earth and subdue it. — From Alton B. Parker's address on Lincoln, February 12, 1909.

## Confusion With Other Classes

were industrious, and on the whole fairly intelligent. They had been brought up in surroundings which afforded little opportunity for acquiring even the rudiments of education, and yet, out of such families came in due time men and women who took their places as active, wholesome elements in the life of their day. On the other hand, there was now and then some member of a family in these degraded classes who could read barely enough to escape classification with the illiterate. If a guess might be hazarded it would probably be safe to assume that up to and including 1860 something approaching five or six out of each hundred of the adult population throughout seven of the nine States\* included in the chosen Pioneer area belonged to a type of people who were even lower in the scale than those generally known as human parasites.

This swarm of drones could not go beyond the solid forests of the wilderness or their heavier growths on the river bottoms. They were essentially a product of timber on flat plains, not on mountains or elevations. There was no hiding-place for them on the prairie where fuel for the winter was no longer available. Besides, by the time the prairie became anywhere a real force no longer inspiring

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\* In this enumeration, I have excluded Michigan and Wisconsin as lying somewhat outside the zone of this order of people. These had their own worthless classes in the mongrels left to them from the imperfect early French settlements; in their portion of the human scum skimmed off from New England, New York, and along the line of march of their settlers supplemented by an undue share of undesirable foreigners; their problems were therefore not essentially different either in kind or degree, though they were so in origin.

## Pioneer Foundations

suspicion or distrust as to its future possibilities the distance from the original source had become so great that it could no longer be covered, and the immediate timber supply in the nearer districts had been almost exhausted. By this time a change had come over the whole American spirit and outlook, so that after the Civil War in which on both sides the worthlessness of these people had been demonstrated, there was no longer a place for recruits to find refuge. All the States within the Pioneer region then filled up so rapidly with industrious and ambitious people, that this residuum was overwhelmed as completely as is possible with so large a proportion of a given population. Its source of supply cut off, there was nothing left for most of the remnant but to take their natural places in the slums of the growing cities and towns; to fall into the class of tramps, that new type created by the time; to recruit the ranks of criminals and wantons; and to live on as they must in the wallow of their own degradation.

No apology or explanation is necessary for thus giving emphatic attention to this class. It has run through all our history, in every original settlement and through every offshoot or branch of our varied activities; but its presence has been minimized or overlooked by those students and writers of the time who never peered deeply enough into the realities to understand how potent and mischievous were its effects, how serious was the handicap upon the work to be done with a considerable percentage of the population thus hanging on, like the Old Man of the Sea as a dead weight, worse than parasites.

## Working Under Strange Conditions

Our political leaders have never seen this load; they have rather preferred, as time has gone on and it became necessary to cement their own power, to use these abandoned people as the groundwork for the corruption of the suffrage. Wherever during the past fifty years bribery has become a recognized feature it has found in these classes much of its raw material. The history of electoral corruption in New England, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, or Illinois — wherever it has been most flagrant — had its root in the depravity of the native population of the type thus described. Thence growing by what it has fed on, it has spread to foreign elements until in one form or another it runs through the entire warp and woof of our politics.

In still later days has come the sentimentalist who, dressed in the garb of altruism and reform though in reality the representative of grasping selfishness and corporate cupidity, has preached a new gospel from which hope, industry, ordered life, and respectable origins and aims have been excluded. These persons, narrow and ignorant, in their zeal for helping the hopeless and saving the useless under the pretense of devotion to the poor and unfortunate, have forgotten or overlooked the wholesome mass of which society is composed.

### WORKING UNDER STRANGE CONDITIONS

THUS FAR in this study of the white man on this continent, in surroundings to him so new and strange, attention has been given to outward manifestations, many of

## Pioneer Foundations

them difficulties. It has been seen how much his progress was impeded at every turn by physical hurdles; how, in order to live at all, he had to stifle pity and to make himself the ruthless slayer of savage human fellows; how he came into religious conditions which, characteristic of a long period, did not permit expansion in his new environment; how he had slowly to change the old conceptions about education or methods of training incident to new ways of life and living; how, as the result of all these things, it was necessary to adjust human nature to a gradual sloughing off of the teachings of experience; and, most important of all, to realize within the short period of three hundred years and in spite of a new spirit of adventure how consciously or unconsciously man clings to his origin and traditions, the slowly-accumulated facts inherent in his constitution and experience.

It is now possible to examine the human product that came from this amalgam. I have explained, at almost every turn, why I have taken this point as the pivot. I have used one community as little more than a lay figure upon which to display the fashions of a hundred years' period in a parent or kindred area. Its natural conditions, its outward facts, its social tendencies, have been to me, not like some county history in which the writer seeks to set up a separate entity which, as he knew no other, was to his mind and comprehension unlike anything ever known. They have rather been typical of a continuing experiment both interesting and vital; and, as such, they must stand upon their merits and achievements. They can no more

## Working Under Strange Conditions

be sundered from their origins than a house can stand without foundations. It is still essential to knowledge and to the safe conclusions based upon it, that the genesis, not alone of the particular period under study, but practically of all the elements and forces entering into discovery and settlement, shall be kept constantly in mind. Every fact must be taken into account—the most important being not the organization or growth of this or that separate community, large or small, but the spirit which, working in a new physical environment, does not always lend itself to catalogue or analysis.



WOMAN'S POSITION AND WORK





## WOMAN NEVER A VASSAL

ANY STUDY dealing with the relations which women bear to a given time faces the difficulty of discriminating the then current conditions from those that preceded or followed — changes in customs and manners coming so slowly that one series has glided almost imperceptibly into another. It is next to impossible to deal with a limited area and a forty-year cycle and to say that such and such a development may be reduced into narrow limits; still, as a whole, the hundred-year Pioneer period does stand out and is so segregated as to make it an entity. While it was the successor of the colonial period, which lent itself to subdivision, the changes in industry and in the later methods of living are so marked as to make it distinctive.

The male patronage of woman which from the times of chivalry had gradually declined left little of the primitive or patriarchal doctrine that she was an inferior being. This theory never had much real substance and that part surviving into later times was mainly a pose, an affectation. In the nature of things this claim could never have had much standing. Even in the wonder expressed by Solomon about "the way of a man with a maid" it is plainly evident. We also know from researches into the history of marriage, that a woman was always a human being, more likely, when not a dictator herself, to yield to coaxing or cajolery than to be driven or ruled by force or fraud.

## Pioneer Foundations

The assumptions about the latter may be ingenious and clever; they may survive as the standard jest of successive generations. The serious drawback is that they are false. From the time that monogamy came to be recognized as the natural state for the propagation of the human species, the reciprocal relations of men and women have not been matters for the assertion of brute power or of control by either sex. If the Pioneer man accepted the woman's position as he found it, his mate was none the less convinced that he was right in his opinion; so that, in all practical concerns, and in spite of appearances, their successors on the human scene, whether in the Pioneer areas or anywhere else, have not greatly changed their point of view.

### WOMAN IN INDUSTRY

MANY old methods, mainly industrial in their nature (rather than the ideas behind them) had survived into these times. They had less historic interest from this fact than for their disappearance in the material revolution that engulfed nearly everything that once concerned individual labor, household conveniences, servants, and social relations. By the time that the last of the Pioneers made his appearance, woman had practically ceased to be the producer of nearly everything that was worn and of some part of the raw material of what was eaten. With exceptions, she no longer spun and wove the fabrics for clothing although she still cut and fashioned the garments for herself and her children and many of those worn by her husband and her adolescent boys. But these people —

## Woman in Industry

in spite of their outward literal acceptance of Genesis — were never seriously impressed with the idea that labor was a curse, and the woman was still the busier half of creation.

From the eastern edge of the Pioneer area to its extreme western verge there was hardly a sane, responsible individual human being who did not know hard, manual toil as the inevitable portion of life — something to which all were inured from their earliest days; the most vital element in the atmosphere surrounding them. Like Adam, the governor and his wife kept a garden and no professional man was so busy or indolent or proud that he did not work in it morning or evening or whenever leisure permitted. If vegetables were neither necessary nor desirable, the housewife busied herself with flowers. Few men asked any workman to do what, in case of need, they would not do for themselves; plumbers, gas-fitters, and other technical workmen being unneeded were unknown; the farmer dug and walled his own well; the wife saddled and rode or harnessed and drove a horse.

The one constant unrelieved worker in the Pioneer family was the woman. To whatever class she belonged, the tale of toil was never-ending. Whether wife or daughter of the doctor, the storekeeper, the farmer, the mechanic or the laborer, her devotion to the industry of the time was incessant. Husband or son might get some respite: she had little or none. If one order of her work declined: there was always something to take its place. Her home required unremitting attention. Her house, however small

## Pioneer Foundations

or however it, like her family, might grow with the passing years as the center of this home, always had its list of insatiate demands—few of them for herself—almost wholly for others. Until her children passed out of infancy it was impossible for her to procure any steady or regular help. From the time her daughters were eight years old she could save herself a step though seldom a thought. Her boys were, perhaps, more useful to her than to the father until at ten or eleven they were drawn off to the more exacting outdoor exertion to which destiny called them: even then they generally relieved her in what Isabella Bird Bishop has properly termed “the difficult art of milking cows”; but if this relief came, if as a business matter she could turn over marketing to her husband, these concessions were accompanied by an increase in the purely household duties incident to her expanding family and larger house.

Indeed prosperity, however much it increased, brought little relief. It involved new and heavier responsibilities, not only round about her, but in church, charity, and in the service of and anxiety for those nearest her. It rather added to her burdens than eased them, as within the whole period no effective outside help became available. While the necessities of her home remained, its amenities made encroachments which, though gradual, were irresistible. She must have homemade carpets and rugs; more attention had to be given to curtains; the demands for wardrobe increased; hospitality, with its exacting duties, pressed upon her as she carried out the determined policy of the

## Courtship and Weddings

true Pioneer in seeking to make life more attractive for her children than it had been for herself. Even her larder, always plentifully supplied, was gradually enlarged as new or strange tastes were adopted — tastes that pressed from every direction and demanded recognition. To these, in line with the demands of the thing called progress, she was always attentive.

The impression is often emphasized in these modern days that the Pioneer woman and her husband were mere drudges without ambition or outlook, like the average peasant; but they knew better and she recognized that she had a mission in life and that she must do her part with devotion, intelligence, and energy. That she did these things well, her life-work attests. She builded better than she knew. If many of these early housekeepers were so particular that a spring cleaning might have suggested the painting of the rose, if they were often credited with having "scrubbed themselves into heaven", they were only perpetuating, unbroken, the traditions of their type.

### COURTSHIP AND WEDDINGS

HE WOULD be a bold writer who, whether from presumed knowledge or from research, should undertake, except in an essay on anthropology or folk-lore, to describe courtship.

Weddings in the Pioneer life were almost as simple and as devoid of ceremony as in the days when marriage by capture was the prevailing mode. In the days of religious rigidity when the dance was still a signal that the fires of hell had been relighted there was but little chance for

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this form of gaiety. Most marriage ceremonies were performed at the bride's home by the squire or the preacher. There was no temptation to have a church wedding mainly for the reason that churches were seldom found — the schoolhouse, which stood in its stead, never being used for purely social events. Wedding journeys and formal honeymoons had not come down in the social descent; so that the couple went at once to a new home and began life with as small regard as possible to friends or the public. In the evening intimate friends would drop in — music being absent or forbidden — to make an uncertain amount of noise with tin pans and any other available instruments of torture fitted for making night hideous until the doors, when opened, disclosed a prepared treat while merry-making in its permitted forms went on.

Among the more dignified sort it was prearranged and understood, and had the qualities of their kind. It took the place of the time-honored wedding breakfast and its successor, the genteel rice and slipper-throwing; but, like other social customs, it had its series of imitations, rough and rude. It was the time-honored charivari: in its descent it was maintained in their dialect as the "shivaree" and often became a boisterous display of coarseness, little, if at all, above the dignity of a mob; generally friendly, but sometimes drawing the rowdies of the neighborhood, and ending not infrequently in fights, shooting, or bodily injuries.

That open, conscious bargaining of material things in marriage which has become one of the saddening features of modern life in old societies was almost wholly absent:

## Courtship and Weddings

and yet no bride of spirit and independence would have thought herself entitled to marry unless she could bring to the partnership the proper trousseau, significant in all times, and the supplies of bed and table linen, jams, jellies, pickles, dried fruits, and other articles, the product and proof of her skill. She thus stepped out of her parental home equipped, so far as her resources would permit, to take her place as the head of a family. Her new life was an expansion—often a modest copy of what she was leaving. On one day she was pursuing her household functions in her mother's home; next morning she took up, automatically, the same duties in her own. Almost universally she was young, because the girl unmarried at twenty looked upon herself and was dismissed by her friends as a recruit to the army of old maidhood. Such a girl, however deficient may have been her education judged by modern standards, was as well trained for her matronly duties as if she were ten years older, her whole life having been an uninterrupted lesson. If ever she was to be a real woman she had already reached this position.

The wedding present had not yet become a fad, a form of extortion, or the outward expression of vain display. The useless silver, the impossible books, the hideous glass-ware or china, no two pieces akin or of the same quality, each staring the other out of countenance, did not confront a bride in ragged Falstaffian array to tax her house-room for storage or her pocket for return payment during the coming years. What was needed and could be paid for without pressure was bought and the new home, out-



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wardly small and humble, started on its way without mortgage, either real or invisible, upon its land or equipment. Now and again there was an heirloom in the shape of a piece of solid silver, or fine glass, or china, that had successfully made the long journey from a home in more settled surroundings perhaps from across the seas; but, in the majority of families such articles were unknown. If possessed, they were hidden away somewhere along with the wedding-gown or the fine black silk dress: the proper, inevitable possession of every woman.

Houses were for use, not showrooms for bric-a-brac. As prosperity came, and with it new or revived tastes, the house of the Pioneer woman, like that of a similar personality anywhere, adapted itself to new conditions so far as household amenities were concerned. In a period when even sacramental vessels were still plain there was little likelihood that individual households should have either desire or ability to indulge in premature display. While the old-time solid furniture, adapted to the successive order of houses occupied by a family, was of the best available, necessity and comfort being the prime requisites — luxury and the gratification of the higher tastes biding their time. The metal knife as used throughout all the periods of civilization since its discovery — probably about the time that the cave man abandoned his primitive habits — upon whose introduction the cry of the conservatives of the day was doubtless, "fingers were made before knives", had little changed. Great progress had been registered when the steel fork with three tines succeeded that with only

## Domestic Service

two; but as the fork itself was comparatively an innovation, the Pioneer had, fairly early in his wanderings, a choice in this important matter. If he could not get spoons made of the so-called German silver of the day or a similar amalgam, then like his ancestors he must be content with steel, iron, or tin, according to the time or place in which he found himself. It was seldom that, outside an inheritance, he could buy or even see a piece of real pewter — that shown or offered being of a cheap, imitation order.

### *DOMESTIC SERVICE*

THE PROBLEM of the domestic servant — always known as the help or the hired girl — was almost as serious as in the early times in Massachusetts when vain attempts were made to institute a selective draft among Indian girls. In Virginia and the Southern colonies there was some relief from this difficult condition owing to the earlier introduction of slavery, both white and black. But by the time the Pioneer came upon the scene the sentiment against servitude had become strong, while the much-abused apprentice system which had supplied the bound boy or girl gradually came to complete failure owing to the lack of material and a broadening human spirit. It was common to utilize the assistance of unmarried aunts, cousins, sisters, and other relatives who were often relieved from their disagreeable fate by the demand for wives, accentuated, as it was, by the disparity between the sexes.

There was no fixed class from which such help could be drawn. The element that furnished the hired-hand

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among men was not available; it was all very well for the man to go into any other man's field but for the woman of like order to enter somebody's kitchen was not permissible. Often she could scarcely be induced to work in her own. The inducements offered in wages were not alluring — the average rate in the earlier phases of settlement being about a dollar a week with board. It must, however, be borne in mind that at this time a man worked for from four to six bits (50 to 75 cents) a day and found himself. So the poor housewife fared on as best she might, working without ceasing with crude tools under many discouragements and showing a cheerfulness garnished by her devotion to duty and her belief, in accord with that of her husband and her time, that she was one of the heralds of a new era for humanity.

In dealing with social conditions, sight must not be lost of the fact that attention is centered upon the various classes or elements of which it is composed. Generally speaking, I must deal with the best because it is only among them that constructive features can be found. They are founders; all others are followers or imitators. Thus, the servant problem did not enter into account at all with the two classes below: they neither knew nor could deal with what, if available at all, was rank luxury. The same conclusion applies to standards of living. The only general consideration is the universal need for work; even here there are differences in the ways of going about it and in the results attained.

## Improved Methods Welcomed

### *IMPROVED METHODS WELCOMED*

WHATEVER mechanical aid might be available was adopted and well cared for and made to last as long as possible until, following the traditions of the American, it was succeeded by some improved article which was better looking or made work easier. The accusation that only the Pioneer man availed himself of improved facilities for saving labor is a base libel. Nobody could look out upon life with eyes wider open for any possible help than did the American Pioneer woman. When the "cook stove" succeeded the old Dutch oven and other archaic devices, a step in domestic progress had been taken that made it necessary to wait a long time for any decided improvement in domestic equipment. It carried with it attachments for baking, boiling, broiling, frying, and heating water which, by enabling her to carry on many operations simultaneously, indefinitely expanded her working power. Additions were constantly made, so that it required no long period greatly to add to her equipment. In this, as in other matters, the woman was both independent and progressive. She soon saw at the county fair or often even in the stock carried by the enterprising storekeeper, the improved articles with whose existence she had familiarized herself in the county or church paper or the widely-read weekly from some distant city. Money, scarce though it was, could always be found for anything that increased labor-power whether in man or woman.

As for the farmer, he was seldom inclined to meddle overmuch with home management; he had his own work

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with its troubles and responsibilities; besides, he was too much interested in his wife as a helper to protest seriously at anything that enabled her to do more work in less time. As for the woman, she did not have to ask for improved facilities because if the means could not be provided from the ordinary budget there were plenty of ingenious ways of increasing it when the return in health and working power was so assured and obvious.

### BEDROOM MANAGEMENT

THE SLEEPING arrangements in a Pioneer house would not have passed muster in these days of tenement-house inspection, and other forms of interference with individual tastes. Often families of ten or twelve would live, cook, eat, sleep, and dress in a single room of moderate size. Such an arrangement would seldom continue after the first year or so of settlement, when 'a shed or lean-to would be built in leisure time for cooking and laundry purposes. Naturally within a few years, the prosperous man would live in a succession of houses expansible in sizes. In the extreme heat of summer there was also relief when the larger boys made dormitories of hay mows.

The beds were of the old-fashioned feather variety, the material being slowly gathered from the homebred flocks of ducks and geese or from the wildfowl that fell as victims to the man's gun, great care being taken to separate for use in pillows the down from the feathers. These articles were a source of great pride to the housewife, and it was a sign of low caste when chicken feathers were used. The

## Bedroom Management

beds were wide, generally one old-fashioned four-poster in the main room, capable of accommodating in addition to the father and mother one and sometimes two or three of the smaller children. Underneath would be shifted during the day to be withdrawn at night, the inevitable trundle-bed, a space saver and flexible as to accommodations.

The cradle was generally full, while the older children would be stowed in a garret with sufficient openings to utilize the heat from the great fireplace. Blankets were dear and scarce, their place being taken by quilts made from cast-off garments — themselves the fruit of many a jolly quilting bee. These were supplemented with heavy comforters and sometimes with coverlets in some fancy pattern. Only a single sheet was used, and if a blanket chanced to be the fortunate possession it was placed immediately over the body, its warmth being welcome.

When hot weather came the feather beds were retired to packing-boxes in the barn and their places were taken by separate bedticks filled with the choicest of oat straw taken from a special stack carefully preserved for this purpose. Often the straw bed took on the character of a mattress and with the surmounting feather-mountain, retirement for the night suggested an athlete's leap or a ladder as a means of approach. The modern mattress was unknown, while the stringing of a bed cord so that it would have both solidity and flexibility when the beds were placed upon it, was almost entitled to rank as a work of art, a strong and skilled neighbor often being called in as an aid. To the male mind, the making of such a bed

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was always among the insoluble mysteries of life. When the house expanded into one of several rooms, the parlor which was a sort of holy-of-holies, and the best bedroom, a pompous looking structure, combined to attest the universal hospitality of the time. When company did actually come this latter room was duly aired, otherwise it remained there, unused, in the minds of the children a thing of awe, an exciter of wonder about its mission in the world.

### THE CHOICE AND PREPARATION OF FOOD

THE METHODS of living, so far as food and its preparation were concerned, not only so far as these related to the Pioneer but all along the line of our colonial and general development, have been subject to much misrepresentation during recent years, chiefly due to the ignorance or the deliberate misrepresentation of the sensational novelist of a later day. These writers, dealing with that part of the population far below the average in prosperity, outlook, and social standing, have carried the impression that the living was limited mainly to salt pork, the most indigestible of saleratus biscuit, the worst of coffee or tea, the coarsest of sugar and salt, and desserts beneath contempt. In other words, the Pioneer has been put down as a lank, half-starved human being, the dweller in a vast outdoor slum.

Of course, the writers or travelers who promoted this idea little knew the lavishness, verging upon waste and extravagance; the nervous care devoted by the housewife to cooking; the regard for wholesomeness; the knowledge of dainties; or the amount and variety of food that day

## The Choice and Preparation of Food

by day loaded the table in an average family of industry with its resulting prosperity. Outside the tests fixed by character — those that circled round the coveted position incident to good citizenship — the first question that was asked about a husband was, "Is he a good provider?" and about a wife, "Is she a good cook?" These reflected, with accuracy, the standards of the community.

1. In the provision of food, the first concern of the Pioneer was to make sure that it could be obtained. On the way through the wilderness, the prudent mover would not settle in a place so remote that it did not afford a supply of fresh meat. If at first he had to rely upon his faithful rifle, he would live only within the areas where deer, wild turkeys, wild geese and ducks, prairie chickens, quail, squirrels, and rabbits were found in sufficient numbers to afford him an assured reward without having to range over so wide an area that he could meet the wants of his family with no undue loss of time from his regular work. He did not hunt merely for sport — in this respect he was still the primitive man. Nor did he hunt in companies — the game he had to get was too wary for this — hence the contemptuous proverb, applied to all the operations of life, about hunting ducks with a brass band. Naturally, a modern battue in which game is shot to satisfy an instinct for killing, or for association with fellows, or for vanity and show was unknown. It was rather as much a part of the business of life as planting or grinding corn, or milking a cow, or raising hogs or cattle.

The true frontiersman was not much of a fisherman, and



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when he indulged in it he fished as he hunted — for use, not for recreation. The streams that he crossed or along which he lived were not generally remarkable for either the quantity or the quality of the finny life they contained; besides, it was altogether too slow a thing for him to follow : it did not yield an adequate return in the way of food to justify the expenditure of the required time or energy. Hence, it fell into the hands of a semi-idle class who could afford to make it a business — often the only one they had.

2. Within the first year after settling, the Pioneer had assured the future supply of food necessary for himself and family. Even in the forest, next to impenetrable, when in any given fall or spring he had fixed upon it as a place for a home the next twelve-month found him reaping, in their succession, amid the stumps or the charred trunks, a harvest of vegetables, wheat, corn, and oats sufficient to carry him on with confidence until the harvest of the following year, reaped from an increased area, brought him for sale a small but assured surplus beyond the demands of his family. He had grown enough hogs for his own pork consumption and some to sell to incoming neighbors, had increased his stock of cattle and horses, grown poultry in all its forms, and however ill-provided in the beginning, he was on the way to prosperity. Time, health, and strength were the only elements to be taken into account. The hunting, which gradually dropped became for the first time the amusement or habit of an idle hour, or the resource that brought a change of diet, and as for him,

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the great, fighting pike might swim in safety back and forth by his door, as if to say, "Come get me".

3. But his supplies of food were not limited to these chances or to this foresight. He and his family had only to walk out into the woods, or down to the river bottom, to get all that was needed and more of the wild fruits growing there in profusion. There was the wild grape, with its great vines which with his usual disregard for the future he pulled down in order the easier to despoil them of a fruit fit for the gods. In the future days, when it was gone, it was always pronounced superior, to anything the Concord, or Catawba, or Clinton could show in what was known as the tame grape. The wild plum, also found there, had a like reputation. The crab-apple, perhaps when eaten raw, the sourest and most disagreeable of all known fruits, worked into delicious jellies and butters, and its manipulation was the pride and often the secret of efficient housekeepers. The wild cherry, of several varieties, was another tree that grew on the river bottoms, gave ample reward to the boys who climbed its trunks and risked their bones and necks among its branches. There was also the black haw, delicious for eating raw after the first frosts; and the red haw which, though a coarse product, fully rewarded its gathering. The blackberries, large in size and fine in flavor, were found on the bluffs where the white oaks grew; while nothing more attractive for the palate ever came out of the ground than the wild strawberry ready for the seeking and the eating along the narrower river bottoms and in some parts on the broad ridges or prairies.

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4. The liberal gifts of nature thus listed were only one part of her bounty. There were the nuts, the king of which was the butternut, better known from the tree as the white walnut; the real walnut of the black variety, almost universal in its distribution and the foundation of the nutting meetings at which it was gathered and of the nut-cracking parties which made its eating stand out as great occasions in the life of families and neighborhoods; the hickory nut, the product of the shell-bark variety of this tree, the more precious by reason of its scarcity; and the hazel, one of the most widely scattered and esteemed of all American nut-bearing bushes. In the absence of the chestnut, the acorn borne by the white oak was highly prized; while the seed of the red oak was so bitter as to be uneatable by man and was not even food for animals. As the prairie was approached, the beechnut of the older West was no longer indigenous, and its tree unlike many others was not transplanted.

5. Early in the spring, reliance was placed upon nature for the first green things that could be eaten. Long before the cultivated plants could be sprouted and grown after the long hard winter, the woods and the fence corners yielded certain products that in the form of greens were both edible and wholesome. It was almost a superstition that these were a necessity for health and a proper opening of the new year. They were few in number, but belonging to the order of perennials and sheltered by the woods they sprung up early as if to compete with certain species of wild flowers. Among the edible plants was one called

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colt's-foot, with a leaf resembling that of the flowering plant known as golden glow; another was lamb's-quarters, an order of cowslip, and the sour dock. The variety and number somewhat shifted in different districts, with the result that almost everything green, known not to be poison, was eaten as greens. Their places were taken, in succession, before other vegetables became available, by the tops of mustard and by those of beets and turnips. Asparagus, spinach, celery, and cauliflower had not yet been naturalized so that the demand for green food could not be met until lettuces and early cabbages came along. Some of these were very toothsome and the older inhabitants insisted that a well-chosen, carefully-prepared dish of real wild greens was superior to any from cultivated plants. The utility of such wild products was attested by the care with which they were guarded. That there might not be a failure nature was encouraged to take her own way and was helped to do her best.

6. No piece of ground came so near to what is known by the term intensive cultivation as the farm garden. It was, generally, from fifty to a hundred feet square, carefully enclosed with a fence of pickets or palings set close enough together with thin, sharp, pointed tops to exclude even the most nimble of fowls however well they might train their wings. It was ploughed to as great a depth as possible and then spaded, where necessary, its soil worked over with hoe and rake, and enriched with every known and available fertilizer that could feed the various plants.

The seeds for the garden were specially grown, procured

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from a neighbor by purchase or exchange, or imported from the outside. Only the most perfect of them was used, and the process of sprouting on this plot of ground — sloping to the southern side when it could be found — and the cultivation was as assiduous as the united labors, at odd moments, of the family could make it. This was the special care of the housewife and, while she did not do all its work, after the preparation it was distinctive as being the only task with any relation to the soil which a woman was permitted or expected to do.

And the reward was great in response to this effort. From the first young onions and lettuce (the headed or Boston or Cas lettuce had not then been developed or, if so, had not traveled so far to the westward) with their successions through peas, beans of all kinds, radishes, onions, beets, carrots, cabbages, kale, early turnips, potatoes, muskmelons, cucumbers, sweet corn, squash, and tomatoes — the table groaned in inexhaustible quantities under as fine a quality of vegetables as nature could produce. They were always ready for eating at just the right moment, when they were succeeded by the product of new plantings; and their cooking where this process was necessary was even thought to be a more difficult art than the preparation of meats, poultry, or fish.

None of this was new to the world, any more than was that part of the garden devoted to flower-growing — the old-fashioned flowers familiar since the earliest of English gardens. Nor has the art that made them both been lost, so that against my rule I am going out of the way to in-

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dicating the existence of something that was neither distinctive at the time nor has since been abandoned — though there has been no improvement upon perfection. It was necessary to do this, in one instance, in order to prove how quickly these people had adapted themselves to their new surroundings, as well as to show how careful they were to provide themselves with food of the best quality in such ample measure.

7. The orchard was a slow development. The presence of the prairie, still a mystery, the higher altitude and the greater degree of cold, the frosts that came early or stayed late made it difficult to adapt the existing varieties of apples, pears, plums, and cherries — peaches outdoors were and remained an impossibility — to the conditions. Then the soil, while not richer than that of Indiana and Illinois, was at least different. In the counties under the influence of the Mississippi, success came much easier than in the interior where many enterprising men, in spite of their general persistence in what they desired or undertook, almost despaired in their efforts to introduce the apple — the fruit that has always appealed most to American taste. The crab-apple tree was used as a base for the grafting process, but the kinship was too remote to insure success. Some plucky nurserymen from central New York stuck to their experiments with the result that, probably ten years after settlement had become fairly complete, say by 1860, success was fairly in sight, and by 1870 some eight or ten varieties of apples, ripening at varying times, had so justified themselves as forever to solve the problem.

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It then required only patience and intelligence to produce like results in the other fruits until throughout its whole area, fruit, plentiful and of excellent quality, was grown, though it never attained that more perfect development found then in Ohio and Indiana, and later in some parts of Missouri and Kansas. From the beginning, probably in recognition of the inherent drawbacks and due also to the unusually enterprising character of the people, orchards of all kinds were well cared for — being grafted and pruned with intelligence, their enemies watched and fought, and the ground fertilized with better regard to soil needs than in any other crops. Nearly every neighborhood contained men who had come from the fruit-growing parts of Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana. It was a day when real coöperation was such a distinguishing feature of the life that what one man learned was at the command of every other with enough energy and enterprise to acquire knowledge or to take advantage from example. No number of agricultural schools — useful and indispensable as they have become — could have taken the place of this kind of teaching — practical, continually before the eye of even the indifferent or incompetent man, constant in its appeal to pride as well as to selfish interest, and inviting better elements to come and help in carrying on a great work. Here, as everywhere in life, there was ample illustration of the homely old saw which affirms that "nothing succeeds like success".

8. In the process of time — and not much of it was necessary in those days of work by many keen and interested minds — especially as they related to cattle and

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sheep, systematic methods of feeding having taken the place of those haphazard in character, the butcher gradually came to his own, and the remotest farmer had for the first time an opportunity to get a regular outside supply of fresh domestic meats. Thus the beefsteak became common — always fried, being the days before broiling devices and half raw meats had found general adoption — far more so, indeed, than the joint for roasting. Mutton was only slowly adopted, but in time obtained further recognition, and thus there began to come a change in food. Most of this appertained to the closing years of our period, after the Civil War. Bacon, ham, and fresh pork were still handled in the old way which was long to maintain its domination. As wildfowl — the quail, the duck, and the prairie chicken — gradually disappeared, poultry came more and more into favor when the breeds of chickens, turkeys, geese, and guinea fowl were improved. Dried beef had early succeeded dried venison as a dainty and long held its place as a food.

The place of corn on the table in all our earlier life is well-known; but how great that place was is hardly recognized. The care, in the best houses, in the choice of the grain sent to the mills was greater than that taken even with wheat. This task generally belonged to the head of the house. The question whether yellow or white ears should be used — always up for debate and never settled — was largely a matter of taste — the former being perhaps the more common. The small grains at the nub of the ear, were thrown aside for other purposes and if there



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were crooked or imperfect grains at the butt these were also discarded — thus applying the strict test used in choosing seed. This grist, thus ready for the miller, was ground separately from other grain and the resulting meal, when returned, was kept with no less attention to sanitation. While meal was used when fresh there was always enough on hand so that the very newest should be given time to settle and cure.

### THE COOKING OF THE TIME

TO TELL the story of Pioneer cooking would be a repetition of the individual recipes of the time — most of them hid away in the memories of housewives whence they were sometimes graciously communicated orally to the intelligent and interested junior inquirer. Some were, however, family heirlooms, as mysterious as a secret process in trade. Tradition always insisted that the best culinary effects were only secured in the old-fashioned brick oven, while others argued that the nearer the approach to Indian methods with a fire between two stones produced the best results. But the kindly and useful cookstove had come in (I wonder that some curious researcher does not sit down and write its history) and so it had to be utilized even by the most conservative.

What the trained cook (always the housewife or her helpful mother) could make out of corn was one of the eight wonders of the modern world. The more prosperous the family, the better its standing by origin and position, the more active the husband was in everything about him,

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the more work the wife was doing in church, school, the neighborly charities, or in the instruction or the wholesome entertainment of her own children and their friends, the more knowledge there was, the more work fell to the family kitchen.

Her achievement with a bit of cornmeal and water or milk, assisted by the witchery that lay in her mind and hands and a stove heated with a wood fire, would have shamed the united French chefs of the world. Hot corn cakes made in a skillet (for her the griddle was yet to come) hot cornbread cut into great square hunks with every child clamoring for the corner-piece with its crust; that best of all foods, a hard bread known as pone which, whether eaten hot or cold, was better to the trained taste than the finest cake (a blessing that had come down from the Indians); and finally, mush eaten hot as a porridge with milk for supper and fried for breakfast the next morning always served in unlimited quantities because owing to its digestive qualities over-eating was an impossibility. These are only a few generic articles growing out of the legion of corn products at once palatable and wholesome — all furnishing material for one of the great chapters in the history of human food.

Hominy deserves a paragraph to itself, as the right method of making seems now to be numbered among the lost arts. The whole grains of the largest, whitest ears that could be found were selected, with all possible care. They were then put into a lye properly tempered as to strength. This was made from the ashes of the white hickory wood

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burned in the cookstove during the winter, deposited day by day in barrels, kept dry for the purpose and guarded from mixture or intrusion. This decoction was put into a large iron kettle (a necessary utensil of every family) mounted on a small specially-made brick oven or furnace or in its absence upheld by one or two bricks or stones under each of its three or four legs. The corn grains were thus soon stripped of their skin which floated to the top and was skimmed off.

In the process the whole mass was stirred at intervals. The grains came out, still intact, and thoroughly cooked. When they had been soaked in two or three changes of water, they were then ready for the separate boiling which the product underwent before serving. It could be reduced almost to a jelly or left in its natural form, as the taste of the cook or the known preference of her hungry constituency might dictate. It could be fried for breakfast; but, as a rule, it was served in the simplest form possible, the whole grain eaten with the ordinary seasonings without sugar, and the result was a dish which was fit for a Pioneer and would have flattered any well-mannered or self-respecting king.

The coming of the first roasting ears was the occasion for rejoicing; their going was a cause for mourning. Their orderly succession was regulated with a degree of calculation that would have done credit to the accuracy of an astronomer working out tables for an eclipse. Fortnight after fortnight new rows were planted, and as the times and periods of each variety were known the cultivation

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being a matter of family pride and self-interest, nothing but some unusual break in the weather could disturb the continuity of supply. It was generally grown behind the unscalable palings of the garden, so that no prowling animal or useless neighbor could interfere.

As this was one of the products which it was sinful to waste, it was gathered by an adult lest an ear not just right for eating should be plucked. Natural selection of the best went on without ceasing and many an improvement thus made justified itself in financial profit as well as in an enhanced return in food value. It anticipated the regular field corn, which was highly esteemed, and also supplemented it. Corn illustrated that retort made by James Boswell to Dr. Johnson's definition in his dictionary of oats as "a food used in England for horses and in Scotland for men." "What horses and what men"! might well have been the apostrophe to corn during all the early life of this country.

### THE HOSPITALITY OF THE PERIOD

IT WAS from these products, which the cornucopia of nature was always scattering with reckless profusion, that the Pioneer housewife took up the task of preparing the food that was to sustain her family and provide her visitors with the hospitality that so delighted her. If these bounties were drawn from every point of the compass the housewives who utilized them were no less eclectic. It was because they had these diverse origins with all their varied experiences, with their failures as well as their successes, that they could

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use their resources to the best advantage. In adapting themselves to their work and the latter to their environment, they could include and exclude, accept or reject, as practice dictated or required. Meeting on a common scene after a training in New England, New York, Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, or Missouri, all moved by the same spirit, they were no more tied down in domestic affairs than in anything else to any provincial or narrow conceptions of life.

As they were always giving and taking, the natural tendency with such plenty all around them was to take and give the best. As they could not get help the Pioneer woman insisted that, as her husband and all her family worked, so must she in order to assure that best, which was none too good for them. She had learned her house-keeping, not merely as an apprentice who mastered the necessary tools of a trade; but for the love of it, in order that she might do her part and at the same time acquire and keep the power that was her reward. She no more knew that cooking was chemistry than M. Jourdain realized that he had always been talking prose; but she knew how to apportion to bread in all its forms, or of whatever material, just the right proportions of each ingredient, how to turn the most unpromising fruits, or even the rinds of melons, into preserves or jams that deserved recognition as poetic or artistic. Though she did not know anything about the use of imported oils in a dressing, her salads were often the talk of a county or the wonder of a State.

The Pioneer woman had perhaps never heard of an

## The Hospitality of the Period

orange or seen a lemon or a pickled olive, but she could use everything she had and produce results that viewed through the perspective of years were marvels of the palatable and the nutritious. She had never heard of Banbury, but her cakes would draw visitors and eaters, old and young, from far and near. She had no facilities for broiling, but a platter filled with fried chicken with its rich gravy was next door neighbor to a culinary creation. What she had inherited from her mother she was wont to pass on, preserved or improved, to her daughter. When her house grew with her family, or her outward position improved, she knew how to adapt herself to it as not to be left behind in the little human procession which marched and counter-marched within her water-tight compartment.

All this living implied a measure of hospitality that was matched only by its genuineness. It was often so general as to impose a serious burden upon the woman as its dispenser. It not only included relations with the direct and collateral members of two families generally large in numbers and with immediate or even remote neighbors, but it brought within its influence the curious or the business stranger from afar off.

There was generally some one family in each neighborhood that drew to itself the majority of such visitors. The governor or the candidate for governor, the senator or member of Congress or the legislature or the aspirant for these places, the chairman or member of the political committee of the party in which the family no less than the father was interested, the bishop presiding at a conference,

## Pioneer Foundations

the presiding elder or the circuit-rider, the editor of the party newspaper come from where he might, and all the ramifying elements that enter into active life were welcome. There was no tavern for any man other than the peripatetic commercial traveler, the drover, or the horse-trader; all others were cared for in the easily expandible, never-filled house of this farmer who was both worker in his own fields and the local magnate in direct succession to his more pretentious, but never more hospitable, predecessor who lived in some baronial hall or in a showy mansion on the outskirts of some old town in a country filled with rank and caste.\* Nor was this a sporadic development: it was found in every neighborhood as it grew into a character of its own.

### SUCH CONDITIONS NOT UNIVERSAL

No IMPRESSION, however, is to be given that the style of living or the order of hospitality thus described was universal or even general. But the example thus set was followed in the different degrees that entered into the make-up of these communities with as much fidelity as are like

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\* This condition is illustrated by the story told of Gen. Robert Toombs of Georgia, which whether true or apocryphal, is characteristic of the whole of this country until the Civil War laid its levelling hand upon so many time-honored customs dealing with hospitality. It runs: A meeting was called at Washington, near which he lived, having for its declared purpose the building of an hotel. He attended, listening to all the arguments and then, when asked for his opinion, declared his opposition upon the ground that they neither needed nor wanted a hotel because he said, "everybody who comes here and worth having, will stop at my house, as has always been the case, and we don't want any others."

## Such Conditions Not Universal

examples everywhere else. In this secluded life the standards of living were as various as anywhere, and the workings of an exacting caste were scarcely less in evidence. The average cooking was so bad as to be beneath contempt. Many women were slatternly, sometimes they were coarse and dirty; children were ill-mannered and boisterous; many men were lazy and useless, shading into the ornery; houses were ill-kept; farms were scratched, not cultivated; horses were beaten and other livestock neglected; crops did rot in the fields or, when gathered, were left as the prey of vermin; men did drink whiskey overmuch and sometimes the women did smoke ill-smelling pipes. In short, this Pioneer world was so very real, there was in it such a variety of men, women, and things, that the effort to attempt a description of it in all its ramifications scarcely seems to be among the things necessary or desirable. I am trying to set forth how first a region and then a State were made; to tell how the American Pioneer traveled and settled; how he struggled and suffered; and how, on the whole, he marched on in triumph until he achieved something worth the having.

There was no reason, inherent in the surrounding conditions, why any man, woman, or child should go hungry, or lack clothing, shelter, or paying work. It was as true then as when Cassius exhorted :

The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,  
But in ourselves, that we are underlings.

So it is not the fault of the Pioneer life if it carried upon



## Pioneer Foundations

its bosom so many elements and forces that did not know how to take advantage of its blessings.

But the best showed a high average, especially when material conditions are considered — and these were the first, the inevitable consideration. The majority lived well, so far as quantity went, though on no such scale as I have set forth as pertaining to the best. They had plenty to eat, as wholesome in quality and as well prepared as they knew how to provide, and their standard improved from year to year. Often their plenty had in it much of rudeness, but, at its worst, it was remote from the miserliness of the peasant. They were little given to selling their best and living on the waste or the worst that had small commercial value. They had their varying grades of hospitality and, when it was in them, they could raise the scale. They were God's common people — a host great in number, out of whom there was to come in due time so much that was both human and good. In peace they worked and worshipped in their own way, not always the highest; in war, they fought for things which they had been taught or had learned to believe.

### LITTLE USE FOR MONEY

MEASURED in money, the cheapness of living under Pioneer conditions was so surprising as to be almost beyond belief in our modern urban life. But even the reader unfamiliar with plain methods has only to consider the simple story as told here throughout, in order to ask what use there could be for money when all the food consumed by a

## Little Use for Money

family, with the exception of sugar, salt, tea, coffee, and spices, was home-grown; where only the materials for clothing had to be bought, with no cost for making, leaving only shoes and dress goods; when rent was a part of the outlay upon the farm; when almost nothing was payable as interest; when schooling rendered no bills except the small amount paid for taxes which the majority escaped entirely and that for textbooks; when the great mass of artificialities, now thought essentials, did not exist; and when content was measured not by an outward show of money or even by what it would buy, but by real values. Even many of the items thus named have no place there. The household groceries were almost uniformly purchased by the barter of surplus products; cloth was bought with home-grown fleeces; shoes with hides sold or exchanged; taxes were paid often by extra wood disposed of in the only available market (the nearby town); indeed, it would have been next to impossible to spend any considerable sums to command even the high standard of comfort then possible throughout the Pioneer region.

Gauged by present-day money standards, the Pioneer farmer like his predecessor, the colonial, was the most poorly-paid man known to our annals; at the same time, measured in real returns, no man of the same general ability and standing will bear comparison with him in service to his country and time, and in individual or collective happiness. Nothing in history more discredits the much vaunted quantitative theory of money than that this country from the days when wampum passed from hand to hand, grew,

## Pioneer Foundations

lived, prospered, and was gradually occupied by an industrious contented population, almost without the use of money, coin, or currency as a measure of value.

*INTERNAL ECONOMY OF THE FAMILY*



## THE CLOTHING OF THE TIME

IN DEALING with the subject of clothing, I am compelled to remember three facts: (1) that I am not writing a history of costume for the time or for any place; (2) that the Pioneer life was made up of men and women who, while they worked with their hands, also had to adapt themselves when off duty to the society of which they were a part; and (3) most important of all it cannot be forgotten that the extremes of heat and cold were so marked as to make necessary, in whatever garments were worn, a supply of two different weights of clothing.

The housewife, while no longer the spinner and the weaver who made woolen and flaxen cloths, still remained the sole, the universal tailor, dressmaker, seamstress, milliner, hosier, and haberdasher of the community. If she could not cut and make the clothes of her husband, herself, and her children, there was nobody to whom she could turn to have it done, and even if representatives of these various trades, now minutely divided, had been present, she would have had no money to pay for the services. She might exchange work with a neighbor or a group of neighbors, and thus form a sort of informal cutting and sewing society with meetings at the houses of the members—though many a mother, confident of her own skill and less gregarious in her nature, preferred to solve her own problems as best she might. Often such a one rather resented

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the prying eyes of an outsider into so sacred a thing as new clothes, preferring, where costume was involved, that element of surprise so dear to the female heart.

Under such coöperative methods the housewife most proficient in cutting garments would devote herself mainly to her specialty and others (there were seldom more than three or four within the same social circle in these gatherings) would baste, or sew, or fit the resulting garments upon the hapless boys and girls whose play was thus interrupted. It was before the days of universal patterns when the human figure, of whatever age or size, can be covered even if not fitted. As families were generally large, and of all shapes and sizes, the garments were fashioned from those already in use somewhere, always making due allowance—this generally meaning an anticipation of growth in the unfortunate child which often produced an incongruous effect so far as appearance was concerned.

The responsibility thrust upon the housewife in the purchase of goods for clothing was always serious and heavy. It involved a technical knowledge of textiles now almost lost from disuse. If intended for winter garments, the principal consideration was to determine whether it was "all wool and a yard wide", as well as its capacity for shrinkage. The way the goods were pulled apart and their warp and woof examined was often the despair of the storekeeper with whom patience, whether natural or acquired, had to be a virtue. In prints or gingham the one question was, "Will it wash?" In this line the knowledge of the seeker counted for less; but the seller's penalty

## Not Oblivious to the Fashions

for mistake or misrepresentation was likely to be imposed even more rigorously than in the case of woollens. The choice of linings was also one of more difficulty than now because the variety was so restricted as often, perforce, to produce ridiculous results. On the whole, however, the Pioneer woman had quite as much natural taste and as sharp an eye for ultimate consequences or results as her more fashionable and more pretentious sister in older communities.

### NOT OBLIVIOUS TO THE FASHIONS

THIS is not to say that the Pioneer woman was proof against the attractions of the fashion book, or the descriptions of gowns and lingerie (how she would have laughed at the use of this word as a name for underclothes) which made their way, in however scanty supply, through the local, political, or religious newspapers that found subscription and study in her family; but it was only to look and to languish for something as remote as a jewel case full of pearls or diamonds : it was not even to disobey or disregard the tenth commandment. The making of women's garments was no simpler than it is now. What with the skill necessary to cover a hoop skirt or a bustle besides fairly fitting the figure, the keeping up with the inevitable changes as to the length of the train, or that thing of male mystery the fixing of the waistline, and the absence of aids in the way of figures or models for study or use, a skill was required that taxed the ingenuity and taste of the maker. She did not have to consider the thing called



## Pioneer Foundations

decolleté (how this word, too, would have puzzled her, the low neck dress being not only unknown but an abomination, if mentioned) or many of the developments, now the vanity of the refined, or the necessity of the well-dressed woman.

This woman had one dear possession : a black silk dress for high occasions; a black of other material for church or visiting; a grey of wool for winter wear; a white muslin dress; a stock of gingham of the old kind for house wear when visitors came; and eked out her wardrobe with a supply of calico or print dresses in various shades of gaiety or sobriety. In many cases, the precious wedding dress, seldom worn, was oftenest held as an heirloom for the daughter when her day of days should come. When to these was added the Quaker sunbonnet—about the simplest as well as the most attractive and to the male mind the most tantalizing of feminine headgear—it will be realized that the Pioneer woman was not devoid either of taste or the desire and ability properly to adorn herself. She often added for headcovering, bonnets of the most wonderful shape (among them the type known then as the sky-scraper, a name afterwards applied to buildings) for dress occasions. These were seldom the work of her own hands but were fashioned with more or less success by the village milliner who learning the only available feminine trade other than that of seamstress proper (with which it was often united) betook herself to the most important town in the vicinity and gave perhaps a year to her apprenticeship. When this was completed, if there

## Making and Mending Men's Clothes

was an opening she generally returned home to follow her trade.

### MAKING AND MENDING MEN'S CLOTHES

MENDING has been one of the problems of womankind from the pre-historic cave dweller down into the most complicated of human surroundings, so that the Pioneer home was only carrying on the traditions of the housewife of all ages. But this one had to work under the hampering conditions fixed by the absence of help, the lack of material, and pressure of work. It was never done, and it was the labor of odd minutes generally after the family had gone to bed. Patched clothes for the men folk, as well as for the children, were the order of the working day and therefore not taboo; but here, as elsewhere throughout history, lay the proverb, "a patch is neighborly but patch upon patch is beggarly."

In men's clothes, there was little style but a variety almost as infinite as the reputed charm of Cleopatra. The working garb had to be adjusted to the season. In the winter, heavy coats, seldom with the garment known as a vest or waistcoat which was an afterthought, with a short overcoat, heavy woolen or corduroy trousers, drawers and undershirts of heavy red flannel, or sometimes of canton flannel, a heavy cotton goods with a nap on one side — all cut and made at home — thick woolen shirts, generally red or blue, with rolling close buttoned collars not encumbered nor adorned with a necktie, surmounted by a fur or cloth cap, with ample ear-flaps, with the historic

## Pioneer Foundations

comforter (beloved of Bob Cratchit) which was a long home-knit neck wrap about eight inches wide and from six to eight feet in length. It was worn by persons of both sexes, wrapped round many times and tucked into the coat in front or tied behind. When, in addition the legs were still further protected by thick jeans overalls and then carefully encased in something resembling the modern puttee, over top boots, inside of which were the heaviest obtainable woolen socks and a pair of overshoes, made of buffalo skin with the hair inside — only, when to all these preparations were added the covering of the hands, was it possible to meet the Arctic conditions outdoors in a sled or on horseback on the way to school or any other errand that required attention with the thermometer ranging from fifteen to thirty degrees below zero. The time required for dressing a man for such a crisis might well rival that of the debutante preparing for her first dance; and the unwrapping process suggested the disinterment of an Egyptian mummy.

### MEN'S CLOTHES FOR SUMMER

THE WORKING costume for summer had all the contrasts that the differences in temperatures could suggest. When the preparatory ploughing began, around the middle of April, the man's clothes took on a sea change. By the first of June and for the succeeding four months the important question was not how much clothing must be worn but how little would suffice to insure decency and personal comfort. When the barefoot season had fully arrived,

## Boots and Shoes

underclothes of all orders and conditions disappeared, the check or hickory shirt of cotton put in an appearance, the coat was discarded and was only carried into the fields as protection against possible rain, the trousers were a light thin denim, supported sometimes by two suspenders, made of the same materials as the shirt, and hence as rigid as such goods can be, but very often by only one; whatever the number, they were always "galluses" out of which grew the slang, "Oh! he is a one-gallus fellow", originally an expression of contempt indicating an inferior social position in its wearer.

This garb was not encumbered with neckwear or anything else of an ornamental order and was generally completed by a straw hat often woven at home or in the neighborhood which, as the season came to an end, had a big ventilating hole in its crown. Owing to the ferocity of the sunshine, it was not safe to go bareheaded, so in order to ward off sunstroke, some kind of compromise head-covering had to be adopted. It is probably a safe estimate that the money cost of a man's average field working summer costume, from toe to crown, was considerably under two dollars.

### BOOTS AND SHOES

THE FOOTWEAR for men was the old-fashioned top-boot — a first cousin, once or twice removed, of the far-famed Wellington boot. The five-year-old boy began with a pair of these, adorned with showy red tops or fronts — the moment of acquisition remaining ever after the figure of

## Pioneer Foundations

speech to describe the ultimate degree of human joy. Boots came in all qualities and weights, the average for rough wear for men and boys being made of cowhide. The capacity of such leather for absorbing water in heavy rains or in the slush made by the melting snow was unbelievable. If left on the feet to dry after the day's work, their removal was the hardest task of the whole twenty-four hours; if taken off in this condition and permitted to dry before the fire, putting them on was often next to impossible. In the first operation, the bootjack (now an almost forgotten aid to the male toilet) was a home-made article, generally somewhat crude in finish, made from a piece of board about five inches wide and a foot long with a supporting cleat just back of the wedge-shaped piece sawed from it. It was put on the floor and thus became a clamp for clutching the boot just above the heel. The rest was left to the main strength of the wearer. In its absence, the growing boy took his father's boot between his legs, and being propelled by the other foot of the victim, became the boot extractor while the brothers did a like service for each other.

For the most part, the average boot was ill-fitting and, by reason of its weight and thickness, most uncomfortable. For Sunday wear there was a calfskin boot which was both presentable and easy. It was costly, being made to order, while its coarser, every-day brother was generally ready-made.

When summer came all boys and young men went barefoot, a concession to the proprieties which was seldom openly made by the head of a family and never by a grown

## Boots and Shoes

woman in a prosperous state of life. As children, girls would eschew all footwear during the summer, a state of comfort abandoned with regret as the young lady period approached. Carrying the boots or shoes when walking along a road and putting them on as a town was approached, one of the settled customs in old New England as well as in modern Russia, was common. It probably dates back to the remotest antiquity. Women's shoes were also heavy and strong, though not so clumsy as men's, with large, low square heels — comfortable, in spite of the tendency in the young of the sex to wear them a number or so smaller than the foot. It was seldom that women's footwear was made by the local shoemaker, his function, outside Sunday boots being limited mainly to repair and stretching.

Knitting was the one manufacturing branch of industry that had survived and perhaps even increased its vogue owing to enlarged use made necessary by the severity of the cold. In 1860, near the middle of our period, general use of such an article as the cotton hosiery of the modern day was still some years in the future. It was given over almost wholly to the useful — the fancy or ornamental only coming in when the supply of the necessary was met by new fashions. Learning to knit was quite as distinctly a part of a girl's education as learning to read and began earlier. It largely took the shape of hosiery for both sexes, and of mittens for the men with an occasional pair of gloves in spite of the fact that the average boy or his father did not relish the hampering of his fingers by separating them.

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It was used figuratively, as "giving the mitten" when an ambitious swain found his advances checked so that this figurative refusal of advances took the place of the maidenly hand for which he was supposed to be an applicant. The mending as well as the making of thick woollen mittens was another of the housewife's onerous duties.

An additional standby for men's handwear was the mitten made of buckskin, although deer soon so declined in number that the real article was displaced by the skin of the sheep or the dog. It could be worn in using the axe and had an endurance or lasting power that much resembled that of its wearer. As prosperity came the glove made of buckskin was substituted for driving purposes; in very cold weather, if the employment permitted, a woollen mitten was worn over it. A later stage of continued prosperity would enable the use of wool-lined mittens and gloves, or others made of buffalo skins with the hair outside, and a larger measure of financial return would further fix both the social status and the comfort with beaver or seal mittens or gloves which, being for both use and show, were the appurtenances of a family rather than of an individual.

For women's handwear the home-made woollen glove or mitten was soon succeeded by a lighter machine-made article, and in its course by the cotton or silk glove almost uniformly in black. It seemed to be the rule, through all the stages of the Pioneer's progress, that the manufacturer always catered first, especially in the lighter and daintier articles, to the needs and wants of women. This was wel-

## The Evolution of the Best Suit

came by the man because the housewife was prone to sacrifice herself for the male members of her family. The so-called kid glove did not become an inevitable addition to the woman's costume until after the close of the period with which I am dealing.

### THE EVOLUTION OF THE BEST SUIT

EVERY man and boy had to have a best suit, generally known in the dialect of the time as his "Sunday-go-to-meeting" clothes. For the boy, until he became seventeen or eighteen, this was a modification of his school suit, generally in a better quality of goods, which was put off when he came home and before he took up that two to three hours of work, hidden under the deceptive and glorified name of "chores." This best suit — as its name indicates — was almost a sacred thing and as outgrown went down the family in succession, as did all other garments for male or female from the oldest to the youngest until in its downward movement it had finally to be worn out as a school or working suit in the fall or spring seasons.

Wearing it was resented as a form of torture, so that its life was prolonged out of due time. Perhaps it was never put on willingly except to go to the circus or the county fair. It had a successor when the boy, grown up to eighteen or twenty, began to find that after all his gibes and bashfulness girls were really interesting and important human beings, he would be promoted out of his mother's hands and sent off to the nearest tailor, probably in the county seat town, with a piece of cloth made in the ad-



## Pioneer Foundations

jacent woolen-mill, probably from home-grown fleeces, in order that there might be fashioned for him a tail coat, known popularly to this country, though not in England, as a Prince Albert. That it came out as one of the wonders of sartorial art is a statement that need not be denied, as nobody could or would dispute this judgment. But, as it was no more ridiculous than those examples worn by his mates, the standard, whether of achievement or of fashion, would not be disturbed and each boy could laugh or be laughed at in his turn.

Every man that either had or was anything at all must have a really best suit for outside use. It, too, must include a tail coat, accompanied by broadcloth trousers, a high vest, white shirts with high attached collars, fine calf boots, woolen socks, but often perhaps of white instead of colored yarn, some sort of a necktie, almost indescribable because it was in the chrysalis stage, hanging between the old-fashioned stock, which had tormented several generations of men otherwise rational, and the simple black ties that preceded the development which has been under way during the intervening half century. Perhaps no generation of men, clad in respectable costumes, were ever more uncomfortable than those of the time under review. They had to conform. They were quite as much the slaves of fashion, in their plain way, as if they had lived in the period of Beau Brummel and the Regent; but they took their clothes, as the early English were said to take their pleasures, with a sadness that nothing could conceal or overcome. In 1860 there were probably never more than

## Men's Collars and Women's Jewelry

from two to a half dozen swallow-tail coats and an equal number of fashionable stovepipe hats — the show suits of the day — in any average county. According to the fashion of the time these men were well and fashionably clad in suits that when new had like modern dress coats an unusual expectation of life. The old-time bandana handkerchief had not yet gone out of fashion, nor had the fine linen one come in.

For probably twenty years the large square grey shawl was an accepted article of apparel for the schoolteacher, for the doctor when on dress parade, or for the lawyer. It was a legitimate successor of the old-fashioned cloak and had all its convenience and warmth. Many readers will recall pictures of Lincoln in one of these over-garments.

### MEN'S COLLARS AND WOMEN'S JEWELRY

EARLY in the war period came the paper collar. It was another step on the way to an improved appearance. If there was one thing in which the Pioneer housewife's failure was conspicuous it was in laundering the white collar and its connected shirt. Somehow she could seldom acquire this art, and it was probably this fact quite as much as anything else that brought into existence the really funny product — the paper collar. It came in, almost without warning, during the early war days along with shoddy and many other articles hitherto strange. It was cheap, in both cost and value (two essentially different things). It came in a variety of shapes, in paper boxes of ten, and was at once hailed as a boon. Many a manly neck which had

## Pioneer Foundations

bent to any sort of collar soon found itself according to the fashion encased in these curious pasteboard bands, thus arousing, in both beholder and wearer, a sense of the ludicrous not always agreeable to all concerned. It was the precursor of many improvements, including real collars, and eventually real laundries, an almost unsuspected passion for cleanliness and an enhanced desire for neatness; but while it lived, which was perhaps for not more than five or ten years of general use, it was one of the really amusing concomitants of the male toilet.

A word ought to be added about jewelry. Long strings of beads were still worn, mainly by girls and young women. Most women wore earrings and had breastpins, bracelets, brooches, or locket, generally rather heavy, old-fashioned articles in solid gold. Diamonds and other precious stones were conspicuous only by their absence. Rings were not so much in fashion; even the wedding ring, not being a necessary accompaniment in marriage ceremonies, was so far from being universal that it was hardly general. Few watches were worn — almost none of them by women — and these were generally set in heavy silver hunting-cases. When the sun shone neither they nor other indicators were needed for telling the time. Every man, woman, or child over ten years of age, asked nothing better than a doorway (all buildings were set square to the four points of the compass) a tree, a row of corn, a fence-post, or wanting all these, his own shadow when standing erect in the middle of a field to give a fairly accurate idea of the hour.

## Treatment of Children

### TREATMENT OF CHILDREN

CHILDREN were such an important element numerically in the Pioneer life that no account would be complete that did not give special attention to them, in spite of the general assumption that they are always the same and everywhere alike. In the chapters devoted to education attention was given to this subject, but there are features in their relations to their time not there considered. It also has an importance because of the changes under which old things have passed away and given place to new.

In respect to the care of children no such person was known as a wet-nurse, seldom an ordinary nurse, while artificial food was so rarely resorted to as to be almost unknown. The mother cared for her children, whatever the number, until the older ones could play their destined part as little fathers and mothers. The old-fashioned walnut or oak cradle was in many cases the only family heirloom, going down from mother to son or daughter and was often an immigrant from one State to another, sometimes doing its bit during at least three generations in four States. Cases have been known in which a single cradle had been the refuge in succession of thirty or forty babies. Once introduced, it was seldom empty; a newcomer generally crowding out an older occupant.

Discipline for children was still patriarchal on religious lines, firm and steady, full of a real affection that was tempered by recognized duty seldom fitful or wavering but practically devoid of show. "Train up a child in the way he should go" and "spare the rod and spoil the child" were

## Pioneer Foundations

as orthodox and better learned by heart than the Shorter Catechism itself. It would be safe to assert that corporal punishment was universal, regardless of sex, almost without respect to age, up to and including majority — often beyond it. It was probably the most widely distributed habit of the time. It was seldom severe, but as the doctrine of total depravity was never questioned so the effectiveness of physical punishment was not doubted.

A family once started did not long remain a burden however great the number, if only its new members could stand the pressure and live at all. Even before direct earning power came, they paid their way by caring for each other. The result was that among people both industrious and prudent the larger the family the greater the prosperity. Therefore, no study that should overlook or belittle the economic contribution of children to this life would be either true or complete. This fact was so much in evidence that in industrious families the average age at which strong, healthy children, whether boys or girls, had repaid to parents the actual money cost, including medical attention, food, clothing, housing, education, and all other possible expense, was not more than fifteen. As it was rare that, save for books, any real money was expended for education between this period and their majority, the half-grown or full-grown child was so much profit.

Taking the value of farms and their equipment at any given census return between 1840 up to and including 1870, it would be safe to assert that one-fourth or one-third of the whole was the product of the labor of children

## Some of the Child Slavery of the Period

under the age of nineteen or twenty, and as the boys seldom left home for an average of another two or three years they probably earned for their parents, in this extra service alone, far more than was distributed to them in the shape of a pair of colts and sometimes as a small farm often given, nominally as a present, but sometimes so seriously handicapped by its lack of improvements that either a mortgage, when available, or tiresome waiting was required to give it value.

### *SOME OF THE CHILD SLAVERY OF THE PERIOD*

NOBODY, not even the boy or girl who put in fourteen hours a day of hard, unrelieved labor for nine months a year, with scant pocket-money often begrudged, with a meagre three or four months in school, accompanied then by many hours of work each day in return for the privilege, ever thought about it as an imposition; but, under this profitable system, talent, ambition, and independence were never before or since so successfully turned into enforced, though willing, sacrifice. As parents had passed through it, it was not thought of as exacting, or unjust, or as child labor in the sense that this term is used as to mill or cotton field, where the hours are tempered by sentiment or law to the recognized average physical strength of its participants and some systematic play is provided; but it was in their own homes, doing the same order of work, often performed under compulsion or threat or crowning it with a devotion, and at the same time a simplicity that was monumental. How they came out of it all, why they

## Pioneer Foundations

did not rebel are among the wonders of a rigorous but marvelous time. And yet these tasks were done with a willingness, even an eagerness, far greater than that shown under more favorable outward surroundings by the average wage earners of those times or any that have succeeded them.

The spirit behind these young people was the same as that shown by their parents — the stern, indefatigable men and women who, whether by choice or fate, were working out their destiny in the belief that they were making and saving a race. This army of children, uniformly numbering probably one-fourth of the active workers of the community, were not doing these grinding tasks for themselves, but because of the hope that driving them on sprang eternal in the breast of the Pioneer, born in him as the inheritance of many generations. They realized, often quite early, the hardness of their fate; but there neither was nor could be any other and they cheerfully bowed their necks anew to their appointed work, as the prisoner in the galleys must bend his back to the oars.

We are all prone to sing peans of praise to the hardy and courageous men and women who went out to conquer a wilderness; but when we do this I should like to hear at least a word or so of chorus to celebrate the sufferings and the achievements of these youthful heroes and heroines who, between the ages of ten and twenty years, added without direct compensation the extra touch that marked the difference between existence and living, between failure and success, and did it in the face of a neglect of the play

## Excuses Which Cannot Be Turned Into Reasons

or rest proper to them; of the charms of that nature which they were too worn to see in all its beauty; and of the educational privilege that was more than unpardonable; really, the result of the indefensibility of ignorance. It was a child slavery far worse than that denounced—often with the exaggeration due to the zeal that marches arm in arm with ignorance—and has finally been forbidden by law and opinion in the past quarter of a century. It was worse, because it included among its victims the best blood that this country had or could have.

### *EXCUSES WHICH CANNOT BE TURNED INTO REASONS*

I KNOW the usual arguments about discipline; about the health-giving qualities of the Great Outdoors; and about the necessity to develop quickly—lest they might, somehow, run away—the resources that nature had scattered with such a lavish hand. Any kind of a plea may be made for the first-named quality. It is as possible under its workings to ruin the health or sacrifice the lives of thousands of adolescent girls by an iron-clad and irrational educational system; or to develop a new country with the feverish haste that makes for waste, inefficiency, or incompleteness and produces a half-baked people; as it is to throw the same system, in its higher reaches, into the morbid and criminal ambitions of a great nation (like Germany) and thus to plunge the whole world into the misery of a universal war. But this haste, this hardness, that stopped neither to think nor to pity was both unnecessary and demoralizing, and has left our people a heritage containing so many bad



## Pioneer Foundations

elements that they have weakened what would otherwise have produced a rounded character with no less of charm than of strength.

I realize the force of the words I have written on this question, nearly always subjected to the process of taboo; but, in making up a verdict on our national life these sinister conditions can neither be hid nor veiled.

It is not possible to belittle the great achievements of that Pioneer who for a century from the day when Daniel Boone went to Kentucky passed through perils and sufferings beyond any ordinary comprehension; it is a subject for pride to know and realize how many worthy and useful men and women came out of the surroundings which, over the pages dealing with almost tiresome details, have been the inspiration of this study. But, while nothing perhaps could have changed the form of the growth and development to which as a people we adapted ourselves, it is permissible to indulge, at the least in a sigh, for the suffering and torture of the young on this long march, and to speculate how much better the world might have been but for the sacrifice to hurry, thoughtlessness, and greed of the brave children whose graves, known only to the All-seeing eye, are scattered over the wilderness and the prairie, to say nothing of the loss of mental and moral energy, the reduced vitality, the murder of aspiration and ambition, the diminishing power of achievement, even the lingering death, of the many more whose physical stamina was still barely sufficient to carry them through to a success often more apparent than real.

## Closeness of Association

What I have written upon this question may be read as a protest against a grinding industry that was untimely and artificial, both in itself and its results, and as far more than a protest — an indictment of a kill-joy theology.

### *CLOSENESS OF ASSOCIATION*

IN SPITE of these high, almost unjumpable hurdles there were compensations now absent. In this simple life, boys and girls were able fairly to know everything good or interesting which within its narrow range the time offered. Long before they had reached their majority they were known to their elders all about them, almost as well as to their parents. On the one hand, their industry, energy, ambitions, outlook upon the world, or, on the other, their laziness, uselessness, or their lack of spirit were so measured that their future place among their fellows could be fairly predicted. This was true, too, whether they elected to remain within their own narrow environment, or went out into a world which if not larger was at least different. The opportunity to know what so many parallel trades meant gave the boys who did not look forward to the farm as a career a perspective and an insight into these other branches of useful work. They could see, at first hand, and thus know from ocular demonstration how the blacksmith, the wheelwright, the carpenter, the shoemaker, the weaver, the store-keeper, the miller, the editor, the politician, the doctor, or the preacher did his work, how he handled his material or utensils, or that more important tool his mind. When they were freed from the farm they

## Pioneer Foundations

could choose, with some approach to intelligence, their own careers.

Then, too, children were admitted pretty freely to see and know whatever lay in the path of their parents. From early childhood they ate at the same table, where manners and quiet were imposed upon them; they went and came freely whenever, indoors or out, there was company; they heard and knew everything that pertained to business or religious or social affairs in all their ramifications and were thus introduced to a wide range of interests which gradually grew into the thoughts and ways of their elders. By these means they knew well, though seldom prematurely, many useful things that could not have come to them under the workings of the usual policy of exclusion — a fact not only interesting and important in itself, but carrying strong evidence of the propriety of the language used in family or social relations upon which I have already insisted.

As the work of these neighborhoods, both singly and in coöperation, was transacted in the open, the children, if bright, curious, really social beings, had an opportunity all over this Pioneer region to know every movement in the mysterious process of making a State from the moment the first family came until within ten years the average township had grown to about six or seven hundred people, comprising all conditions of men, and the county had made a place for itself. Such a child became an interested spectator long before it was fairly out of its first order of clothes. It heard all the discussions about schoolhouses and schools, about roads and bridges, about preachers and re-

## Learning from Elders Everywhere and Always

vivals, about government and politics, and would, in its simple way, take its measure of the various elements with which it came into contact. If there was any amusement from a shooting-match to a hunt for a horse thief it would be first a spectator, and then, often prematurely, according to its development or precocity, a participant. If it was inclined to the bad or coarse, it might hear or see, now and then, uncanny things, but woe to the man or group from whom such offenses came if the really discriminating elements in the neighborhood should discover this attempted demoralization.

Such a child, in spite of educational drawbacks and deficiencies, would get a real knowledge of the world far more helpful to it in its later days than that which could possibly come to the more eclectic and pretentious training that some distant child acquired in urban surroundings. Its life, in spite of hard, grinding toil at certain seasons, was far from dull, and it acquired in reality that all-around knowledge and experience which have given to the American the abnormal development so often accounted as a reproach to our life.

### *LEARNING FROM ELDERS EVERYWHERE AND ALWAYS*

IN EVERY neighborhood there were the visits, constant and steady, of the older men and women, parents or grandparents, uncles or aunts of settlers, or other relatives and old friends from the States of origin — which then seemed as remote as the stars. They were received as welcome messengers from another and different order of existence.

## Pioneer Foundations

They came from districts into which, perhaps, the railroad, the canal, the steamboat, and the slowly-perfecting telegraph had penetrated and where the superior lawyer, preacher, or doctor was found and known, or the newspaper, somewhat less primitive, was published. These visitors, often remaining for weeks, knew something of the incipient manufactures of the day and even had some familiarity with public libraries, academies, colleges, and universities which though rude were superior to anything that the newer community could know. Out of these social relations, from these out-world real human beings, the eager, curious boy and girl, with open eye, ear, and mind, would get something new and valuable. This process went on in every township; and here, again, the policy of including the children was carried out much to their entertainment and advantage.

It was not the highest expression of the best the world held even then; but it was wholesome and intimate and, best of all, it was new to them; with all its faults it sank deep into the youthful mind. It was akin to that Oriental method of communicating fact and poetry through the teller of stories and legends and the later methods in mediæval days by which the ballad-maker and singer who, crude though his music may have been, fed the mind or aroused the imagination of his listeners.

This close association with neighbors and elders not only brought to these children, exiled to an always receding frontier, a knowledge of men; but it corrected many of the defects inseparable from their narrow educational out-

## Learning from Elders Everywhere and Always

fit. They were far more likely to learn something real about geography by looking up in their atlases the place of residence of the visitors to whom they had listened with open eyes, ears, and mouths than when they were limited to memorizing the meaningless names of countries, capitals, or rivers in Asia, or to bounding some artificial and useless principality in Europe. They had a better chance of knowing something both interesting and useful about manufactures, from hearing all about a reaper factory in Chicago, or an iron foundry in Pennsylvania, or a big new wagonmaker's shop in Indiana, or a cotton mill, or a shoe factory in Massachusetts, than they had from the meagre, undirected, undigested reading about such enterprises in the fugitive accounts that might pass under their eye or even be wholly missed from their lives by neglect or the absence of opportunity.

This constant, never-resting communication of people in one part of the country with those who had plunged into the forest or the remoter uplands had a potent influence. It not only peopled new regions but it carried back, in due time, against the day of real need some of the most enterprising of the young who with narrow opportunities but with an insight whetted by environment and experience, returned to seek an enlarged horizon.\*

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\* These are not to be confused with the movers-back of whom I have written somewhat fully and, I fear, rather disparagingly. The latter belonged to the restless, often to the unsuccessful in the original migrations. Those referred to in the text were of the next generation, who, seeking a different work from that about them, or from that which was far beyond them on the plains or

## Pioneer Foundations

These boys and girls passed through such a life, went out to their work in every State in the Union but especially into those callings demanding health, strength, energy, ingenuity, initiative, and above all ingrained integrity. Wherever they went, and whatever they did, or their descendants are doing, in spite of changes of scene or the outward form of their labors, they are as truly the product of the original Pioneer spirit as if they had passed their lives amid the surroundings in which their grandfathers helped to lay the foundations of new States.

I have set forth herein (I fear with ill-concealed asperity) the harshness of the surroundings in which children lived, the demands that industry made, and the meagerness of educational privileges; I shall take occasion, on succeeding pages, to describe the games and sports which disprove the general assumption that all was work without play, and that as an effect Jack must have been the dull boy of the adage.

### *HOW FAMILIES STOOD TOGETHER.*

THE TIES that bound families together were unusually strong during these formative days. Sentiment still surrounded blood relationship in a way almost as striking as

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across the mountains, pined for something older or more conventional and thus sought it in the regions of origin. The influence that this back flow of enterprising and ambitious young men and women had upon the later development of the country, as a whole, is almost beyond estimate. Its detailed treatment does not fall within the purview of this study but deserves the attention of any reader interested in the human tides that have flowed and ebbed through the life of the time.

## How Families Stood Together

in the Biblical times upon which so many customs and manners were predicated. Families followed one another in the making of new settlements, all the members helped in their work, espoused each other's likes and dislikes, and in general were friendly. Family then meant both sides, those of the husband and the wife. The mother-in-law joke had not acquired its present vogue, as, in most cases, the wife's mother was often the one reliance in time of need. If one branch lagged behind in life's race it was seldom cast off but was aided so long as it showed a desire and willingness to help itself.

If children settled down in the same neighborhood, they generally did so in small and modest homes where, without parental gifts of money which few had to spare, they made their way up as their forebears had done in one generation after another. Often they were able to command that advice and assistance which are so much more valuable than unearned money. In this way they could maintain in emergencies that coöperation which enabled each to benefit the other. The replacing of a cow or a horse when lost by accident, disease, theft, or straying, the timely aid in haying, or harvest, or storm, the going for the doctor—all these various functions were discharged without much regard to the fact that they lived in many houses rather than in one, as in other days.

There was a strong feeling against married sons and daughters continuing to live in the parental home—the feeling of independence dictating a separation. It was a



## Pioneer Foundations

sentiment, so common as almost to be proverbial, that no two women with any considerable measure of authority should live in the same house. This prompted the sententious saying that "no house, whatever its size, had ever yet been designed or built that was big enough for two families with a divided authority and none too small for single families that wanted to be happy." When boys or girls went away to school or out into life the parental watchfulness was keen and the feeling of pride universal and strong. Perhaps the proportion of family quarrels was smaller than in a more conventional society. There was not much opportunity for differences about property; the laws providing for equal distribution prevented this; besides, as there was not much property to divide there was little to quarrel about; it was easier and pleasanter, as well as more independent, to earn it than to yearn for it by inheritance.

Perhaps the strongest incentive to family unity lay in the fact that there was little going away to school or for long and distant visits, and that the latter when made had an interest for all concerned, the reports of them tending to relieve the tedium incident to isolation. They were all driven to steady work, with no idlers or favorites, so that there was every motive to draw together and few to drive them asunder. Everything considered, isolation tended to promote family peace and unity, and as each community was a collection of families there was little chance to brew dissension or misunderstanding.

## Fighting Off Cold in Houses

### FIGHTING OFF COLD IN HOUSES

FEW features in the early history of this country changed less in its first two hundred and fifty years than the method of heating. Except for the fact that it was both a reliance and a necessity, the fireplace of the earliest days did not greatly differ from the same device in the present. In adjusting themselves to a climate of longer winters and more severe weather than they had known as Europeans, new developments were necessary. So they took the open fireplace, built it deeper and wider, and living where the destruction of wood was one of the highest virtues they were prepared to burn all that was necessary if they could command some measure of comfort. Perhaps the Pioneer was even more liberal in the expenditure of fuel than his precursor, the colonist. As the former penetrated into the rich forest lands of the West, the timber became heavier than in New England, Pennsylvania, or the South. There were no mountains, and even few uplands, so that, as a larger proportion of the land was available for cultivation and as all had to be cleared before it could be used there was no choice except to treat every part like every other when it was finally reached. There was no chance to dodge or go round it.

By the time that the great central plateau between the Allegheny and the Mississippi had been reached, the house-heating problem had not only become a known and fixed quality but had settled itself. It was a question of the size of the fireplace and its constant supply with fuel. The varieties of wood to be used had not much changed, ex-

## Pioneer Foundations

cept that hickory had become more of a reliance. If oak and elm were less common, black walnut was more plentiful. Whatever wood lent itself the more easily to manipulation was used. The line of least resistance was the only one to follow. There was no idea of economy; only the destruction of a nuisance could be in mind.

### THE ART OF MAKING A LOG FIRE

THE MAKING and maintenance of one of these great fires constituted a difficult art and was a man's job : women lacked both the strength and the knack. In the coldest of weather when the fire never went out, it was replenished on Saturday night generally after the children had gone to bed. The old fire was allowed to smoulder until little was left but a great bed of coals which still threw out a strong heat. A great buckeye log, often two feet or more in diameter, had already been cut and brought to the front door where it awaited transfer to the bed of coals prepared for it. It had been cut with mathematical care so that it would fit exactly into the angles. As such a chimney would have a width of from four to six feet, this piece of timber had something of the dimensions and much of the character of a sawlog, and was handled by the methods used in a logging camp. It could only be moved by levers and canthooks, and when it had finally reached the fireplace it was rolled over the coals on improvised skids into its final resting place. Then the short, heavy andirons were adjusted, a suitable forestick, generally of hackberry or hickory, perhaps ten inches or a foot through,

## The Art of Making a Log Fire

was put into its place and the vacant space filled with the coals and dry or quick burning wood so that no chill should come into the room. The structure (no other word can describe it) was completed by a top backlog and a top forestick to insure and regulate the draught.

When all these operations, requiring perhaps a half an hour, were over, there was a fire that would have reflected high honor upon the most dignified and hospitable of baronial halls. The soggy backlog, which did not get much more than heated through during the first two or three days, then slowly burned away, outlasting a new green forestick each day and two or three top backlogs until, at the end of its life of a week, it had almost disappeared. If the severe cold continued it was replaced by a worthy successor.

Careful precautions were taken against danger from sparks or defects in the chimney. The most serious difficulty was the smoke to which fireplaces have always been prone; but the real Pioneer knew pretty well how both to build against this and to overcome the nuisance when the wind was shifting and unfriendly. With all its virtues, such a fire had a good many drawbacks. If imperfect or low so that every part of the room was not heated, it was likely to leave its shivering victims to freeze on one side while roasting on the other. This was the effect in probably the majority of homes where it was in use; but the Pioneer adjusted himself to faults, philosophically balanced them with virtues, and thanked his stars that matters were no worse.

## Pioneer Foundations

But the emission of heat was not the only function of the well-regulated fire. In addition to radiating cheerfulness it was a producer of thought. It was the most democratic among all the material influences, known to the Pioneer; to look into its flames and to feel that this element, fire, was under perfect control; to see and know its dancing sprites and fairies did much to replace those historic representations of these creatures so strangely missing from the folk-lore of the time; to come into its presence from an outside air that might well have been Arctic, and to welcome to its hospitality the freezing neighbor or the passing child or stranger, these were not the dear, imaginary joys yielded by poetry; they were part of that life of isolation from November to March in each successive year.

### USE OF THE OPEN FIRE FOR LIGHT

NOR DID the utility of the open fire stop with its heat-giving power; it was the one effective light available as a free gift. By its cheerful blaze, the Bible brought those words of comfort never before or since yielded by any single book — a source of consolation never again to be known to humanity in all its extent or completeness. The fire was open to every child about its hearth until sleep overcame, because in those simple days filled with exacting toil for all the task of driving children to bed was not the hard one it has become in modern life. The exception was the serious boy or girl intent on studies or, when opportunity came, upon the reading of some stray book. The

## Use of the Open Fire for Light

fire was then the principal dependence for light. Other than this, they had only the sputtering tallow candle, well enough for the few minutes they could steal just at bedtime from a short summer's night, but almost useless as a reliance during school terms in the winter.

The men and women who in after years could recall the joys of childhood and youth, always pronounced benisons upon this vouchsafed blessing. The enthusiast in arithmetic, as well as his brother with dull brain to whom every sum was an abomination, owed an equal allegiance to this boon. Even if, as in the case of the boyish Lincoln, the figures were made upon the wooden fire shovel, only to be shaved off against another day, the whole operation would have been impossible if this hospitable light had not been there — free as the rays of the sun, awaiting use and only arousing doubt or apprehension when the voice of the awakened parent pronounced the summons to bed where the zealot for knowledge ought to have been long before.

Nobody in this day can have any conception of the deprivation that came from the absence of an effective artificial light. Whatever relief the open fire might bring, it had its limitations. Its one-sided quality, whose enforced alternative of roasting and freezing was always in evidence, was a drawback; besides, it was not all-comprehensive, as any one must have observed who had the privilege of seeing a half-dozen live, eager, half-grown children, all clamorous for the most favorable spot, neither too near nor too far away, and the resulting disappointment when one or other was exiled into the shadows of a candle.

## Pioneer Foundations

These candles bore a double relation to the members of a family. They had been made in the house, every child learning early the art of handling the moulds, of adjusting the wicks, of pouring in the molten tallow, and the more interesting process of withdrawing them by their contingents of a half-dozen. They were intended not only for the home, in all its constituent parts, kitchen, supper-table, and bedroom (when the latter finally came into the enlarged home) but were in evidence always as a contribution by a few active neighbors at the sermon on Sunday night, or in the prayer-meeting on Wednesday night, or in the stuffy air incident to the month long revival (an annual affair) because on these occasions everything was announced not by some hour indicated by an artificial reckoner (not even by a daylight saving law) but by one of the operations fixed by nature, that is, "early candle-light". It would be unfair to discuss which was the duller on most of these occasions: the light in the little school-house, or the services which it permitted but did not illuminate.

### WHEN KEROSENE CAME

RELIEF from these primitive lighting conditions began to come, even on the confines haunted by the Pioneer, in about 1863 or 1864 when the new and mysterious product then known as coal-oil gradually forged its way into the market. It was crude, a peril to life and property, consumed in rude lamps with ruder burners and fragile, costly chimneys. It was sold for a dollar a gallon; but, in spite of all draw-

## When Kerosene Came

backs, the relief which it brought gave it a heartier welcome than was perhaps ever granted to any improvement either slowly discovered or suddenly made by man. It changed as if by magic the entire outlook. Not only was it a boon in and of itself, but it was mysterious.

Nothing was then popularly known about mineral oil and so the conclusion was at once reached that if it could be found in one place it might be distributed over the universal earth. So much interest was aroused that every little stream, almost every mud puddle, was surveyed for anything even resembling an oily substance, or a scum that might arouse hope. The amateur geologist looked wise, gave out opinions more or less mysterious, probably mildly lucrative, and certainly without the least value to the eager landowner newly made a speculator by the inflation incident to the Civil War then in progress.

Improvement in refining processes was constant. As the lamps, wicks, and chimneys became better, the perils began slowly to disappear until from those small beginnings one of the great blessings of the century was in full operation. If anywhere in the history of man monopoly in any industry ever justified itself, it was in the production and refining of kerosene oil. If John D. Rockefeller had even been a real Pioneer and prophet in this work, no sensible man could be found to envy the wealth he acquired from it.





WAYS OF AMUSING THEMSELVES



## GAMES FOR MEN

IN NO part of the machinery of life left behind by the colonial as he pushed out on his westward march from four coast centers was there more of difference between his customs and those of the Pioneer than in sports and games. On the James River there were maintained during the first century, in spite of their exotic character, the sports current in England; on the Delaware, neither the small contingent of Swedes nor the Quakers, with their somewhat somber minds, seem to have brought that desire or power of grown men to play the games that they had left behind them; on the Hudson, the Dutch evidently had on their minds problems of living and the necessity to adjust themselves to new conditions which in spite of Rip Van Winkle's somewhat memorable game at bowls made the maintenance of sports an unimportant matter; while on the Merrimac the people were so much concerned about their souls that in their thankfulness for escape from what they looked upon as follies they did not give much encouragement to the introduction on this side of the Atlantic of anything fairly resembling adult play. All these people hunted the game about them mainly from food compulsion, but they found that hemmed in on every side by an impenetrable forest and surrounded by implacable red men, they had first to feed themselves and then to protect their lives from aggression which lay all about them.

## Pioneer Foundations

Then, too, in no other temperate region of its size known to man were large animals found in so few varieties and such limited numbers. There were no wild horses, boars, cattle, sheep, or goats; from Virginia onwards the bear and the fox, never found in great number, were, like the wolf, dealt with not as game but as marauding vermin; the buffalo was never, at least in historic times, a figure of more than sporadic occurrence until the few thousand square miles of open prairie were reached in Kentucky where both climate and vegetation permitted them to live through the winter. In order to kill game for food there was little need to look for it: the environment, being forest, was about as favorable in one place as in another, so that men were under little necessity to organize a deer drive with its showy paraphernalia when their food wants could be supplied without going beyond calling distance of their own doorsteps.

Horse-racing had not yet become a recognized all-around sport, even in England, as the proper breeds of animals were not introduced or perfected until after the colonial settlements were well under way. Besides, racing has always been a pageant, dependent for success upon fashion and wealth as well as upon numbers. It had, therefore, to wait a century and a half for the adaptation both in Europe and here of the horse to a new environment and of man to a revived or a new taste. Room for this was not afforded among a sparse population with no time and little desire for any settled form of sport of a public character.

## Social Inclusions and Exclusions

In like manner the coarser amusements incident to cocking mains and dog fights tended to decline. In the absence of the innate passion for killing or maiming something, lying at the foundation of such activities, there gradually arose a more humane spirit, constantly growing and never lost on the onward march. While much brutality remained, it tended to lose attraction in its organized form — the religious feeling due to the brooding incident to isolation exercising a strong influence.

The higher or intellectual amusements were also eliminated. The theater which, on its revival in Western Europe, had begun to exercise such a profound influence upon men was both absent and forbidden. It is not possible to discover in the annals and histories of the time that during the seventeenth century there existed on the American continent a complete copy of Shakespeare's works, or of any other among the dramatic writers of the Elizabethan or Jacobean periods. If these were absent and forbidden, it is easy to conclude that the imaginative, though somewhat free drama of the Restoration period out of which the exiles had come into an improved material organization of their lives, would find little recognition or encouragement. There seemed not to be any general need for the dramatic in any form, so long as the mass were forced to live among the unrelieved, and unchanging scenes of human tragedy.

### *SOCIAL INCLUSIONS AND EXCLUSIONS*

WHILE the Pioneer thus came into duties and surround-

## Pioneer Foundations

ings in which he had little time and less inclination for hunting and shooting as amusements, he never quite lost his devotion to games—especially among his children. Some of these were new in form or adaptation; but, for the most part, they were so old as to be time-honored. In some cases they partook of the nature of both sports and games, and in others they related themselves somewhat intimately to the practical business of life. If the Pioneer attended a barn or a house-raising he was there primarily to do his part in the process of give and take. It was practical coöperation : a return for favors received or a possible anticipation of favors expected. The question of getting or giving pleasure was secondary; but, in his somewhat primitive way he did not disdain enjoyment during these few hours of outing and close association with his neighbors. There was little room for the rowdiness or horse-play, inherent in the man of the rougher sort even if he had been so inclined; but, generally speaking, he had little leading in this direction. If he insisted upon turning the scene of a house-raising or log-rolling into a game, he soon found that he had no business in that gallery. When the work was done it might be followed by some rude fun in the form of wrestling, jumping, running, shooting at a mark, or supper at a neighbor's house; but, if so, they were only incidents.

Social exclusions and inclusions were in evidence even here. Every needed neighbor within reach would help; but, even then he must be congenial for the reason that if the new house-owner or other beneficiary belonged to

## Decline of Game Shooting

another class or group the act would become an exchange of labor, not a social function which might either entail or permit association warranting familiarity; so that, even under the most friendly guise the participants might have no intimate relations with each other, in themselves or their families, except on a like return occasion. Even if the community was new this temporary coöperation did not argue the swearing of eternal friendship. Nobody would be snubbed or offended, because each knew by a mysterious instinct just where he belonged. None stooped, on the one hand, or, on the other, aspired out of due time or place.

### *DECLINE OF GAME SHOOTING*

WHEN firearms became no longer a necessity for defense against Indians or for gaining food, shooting gradually fell somewhat into disuse. It was not possible to do much in the way of game-hunting on the prairie with the old-fashioned long-barrelled squirrel rifle which on the journey through the woods had been so useful as both a weapon and a tool. Skill with it had enabled the colonials to win one war and their successors to blunder through another; but it was not effective in reducing the numbers of quail, prairie chickens, wild ducks, and geese that passed over the heads of the Pioneer. Only a small proportion of these men was at all inclined to hunt, and few even of these were the leaders of the new community. If in some small measure the boys revived hunting customs they like their elders were prone to give them up when they assumed the responsibilities of life.



## Pioneer Foundations

Thus, this order of sport was left almost wholly to the irregulars: the camp-followers on that long march. The shotgun with its primitive ammunition was then single-barrelled, with a limited range and not available for the fine art of shooting on the wing—which remained practically an unknown accomplishment. Even the shooting match, in which success of the entrants in hitting a mark was rewarded with a turkey or a dollar, was maintained for a time; but, as it made only a narrow appeal it, too, lost its vogue as the woods receded or were forgotten. Long before this time, hunting or fishing on Sunday had become anathema which could only be removed by conversion and activity in the revival meeting the next winter if back-sliding was indulged in. As a result of all these tendencies, the armies raised in the newer States during the Civil War had lost much of that old skill in marksmanship which had made their predecessors so formidable to enemies.\*

### ATHLETIC GAMES AND TESTS

THE FRONTIER was given over to games in which within their limitations practically all participated. Jumping was one of the steady amusements of the Pioneer. The legend of the great running jump of George Washington (probably apocryphal) was as universally believed as Parsons Weems' cherry tree story; but, while it was emulated with

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\* If, by any chance, any English reader should ever do me the honor to read this study, he will note that hunting is used wholly in the sense of shooting so that the two terms are synonymous and not descriptive of different processes or sports as in the Mother Country.

## Athletic Games and Tests

persistence and energy no man seemed to be able to equal or excel it.

Pitching quoits had been an exceedingly simple but accepted game in the later Virginia days. The simple instruments used in it being unattainable, it had crossed the mountains with the substitution of horseshoes. In the transposition it had become more difficult as a feat (gathering about it new rules and complications of its own) so that, when played at a proper distance from the stake it was no longer either easy or simple. Its vogue continued almost unimpaired as something for both men and boys until it was maimed, almost beyond recovery, in the Civil War. It was a sensible, wholesome game in universal use upon the occasions mentioned and later at political rallies and the growing number of meetings that came before it was almost retired from use. That it is not wholly dead may be seen in rural communities to the present day; but its glories had practically departed before 1865.

Foot races were also universal on these occasions; tracks of varying lengths were laid out for men and boys and even for those girls and women whose dignity would not thereby be offended. Races in sacks or barrels, across hurdles, under or over fallen trees or other obstructions were common. Sometimes there were prizes of firecrackers or home-made candies for children, but the older people were supposed to exhibit themselves for the amusement of others. The hard-working farmer, his big boys, and his hired hands were not quite so supple in the joints as to make a phenomenal record for speed; but among the young

## Pioneer Foundations

er boys not yet in the adolescent period the showing would be better. All did their best in honest rivalry without any idea of professionalism or profit of any kind — elements which, it is only fair to say, were absent from the minds of these plain people wherever they were found along their hundred-year line of march.

The swing was an outstanding element in the outdoor diversions of both old and young. It was generally hung over the straight, high-projecting limb of a friendly tree, gauged in length from ten to thirty or forty feet in order to accommodate all sizes and ages. When ropes were not available, it was made of grape vines or long hickory poles, fastened securely at the top with hickory bark or willow or elm withes (careful attention being given to safety). It was the aim of the two boys, or men, who occupied the swings face to face to raise them so high above the level that each could peer over the opposite side. Girls and women, less daring, were usually driven by attendant swains as high as possible with due deference to nerves and screams. In general, as a feature contributing to the pleasure of crowds, the swing had a prominent place, though it was seldom found on school play-grounds as a regular game.

The seesaw, known only as the teeterboard, was always an improvised game played, upon inclination, wherever there was a fence of any kind or a big log and a slab or a board. It is one of the oldest of known playthings, coming down from the palmy days of Carthage, if not earlier.

In every neighborhood there was the man or boy who

## Athletic Games and Tests

could climb a tree quicker or easier or higher than any other. He was sure to be present ready to exhibit his skill in rivalry or on a dare upon all public occasions. Remembering these exhibitions from early life it was easy for me to understand the usefulness of this gift when, many years after, I saw it in use by German drill-sergeants in Nuremberg, as the first exercise for army recruits, special devices being employed upon which the member of the awkward squad climbed a pole twenty or thirty feet in height, then ran along a round cross beam eight or ten inches in diameter and some ten or twelve yards in length, only to climb down another pole.

The Pioneer used this simian gift to discover the store of wild honey in a bee-tree, to pursue a squirrel, a raccoon, an opossum, or other indigenous animal, or to fix a swing or other device for play; but, for the most part, it was animal spirits or rivalry that made him a climber. Hunting a bee-tree was largely given over to the man whose expert eye and swiftness of foot had fitted him for his task. Such a man could follow a few stray bees when once satisfied of their direction in flight, and nothing could discourage him. Sometimes its completion would become a neighborhood job when all participating would share in the often large store of sweets to be extracted after the bees were smoked out or the tree had been felled. There was seldom any question of the right of discovery. As the tree must be a hollow one the owner was generally satisfied with the disproportionate share of the hoard awarded to him in recognition of proprietorship.

## Pioneer Foundations

### PLAYING PRACTICAL JOKES

THE PIONEER was not averse to the playing of practical jokes. If he could find what he would have called a greeny or gudgeon (known to modern parlance as a tenderfoot) he might lure him at dead of night into the woods on the pretense of robbing a bee-tree, at the top of the highest hill, when, just as the victim began to chop, a volley would be fired by concealed confederates in order that all the onlookers in the secret might enjoy the rapid downward plunge of the confiding victim through the darkness.

He had another device which soon became too well-known to deceive even the simplest. It was represented to the more susceptible of victims that a chosen dark and cold night would be a good one to go sniping. This was the supposed process of catching a bird, seldom seen at all and perhaps never in November, by driving it in imaginary coveys into a bag which must be held open by one or two confiding victims while the rest scattered themselves under the promise to seek out the birds and drive them into the improvised trap. The place chosen was so remote that no sound of voices or other noises could reach in or out. The principals in the game would either go to bed or lie in wait to jeer at their victims when frozen or tired out they finally found they had been deceived. As these tricks could only be played once both by and upon the simpler men, mainly newcomers in a neighborhood, fights and sometimes more serious difficulties would come from them. It was horseplay of a rough, though not always a bad element, and this was only one of its ridiculous shapes.

## Practical Absence of Holidays

### PRACTICAL ABSENCE OF HOLIDAYS

THE PRACTICAL absence of holidays tended to destroy both sports and games among mature men. There was no Easter or Christmas. Thanksgiving was only revived in the Civil War period, and even then came slowly into recognition; and New Year's had not attained the social importance that was its portion in the towns of the older parts of the country. Washington's birthday attracted little attention; while the newer holidays, such as Lincoln's birthday, Memorial Day, Labor Day, and Columbus Day, still lay far ahead.

This left the Fourth of July, of which it is only fair to say that of all the celebrations known to man and supposed to be joyous it was probably the most dismal. It had the inevitable reading of the Declaration of Independence in the drowsy, droning voice that seemed to have been invented by the boy or the schoolmaster to whom it was entrusted, evidently kept in rude training for this purpose. Rhetorically, it is not at its best an over-cheerful document. The recital of grievances redressed from sixty to one hundred years before could not be galvanized into much life, and it was perhaps the worst historical example of its type. This was followed by the then universal oration, generally the product of some ambitious young lawyer from the county seat or the capital town. It held in it the very rigor of the time and place, was made so exactly to pattern, and was such an obvious imitation of earlier like efforts (when the occasion still had vitality and some reason for existence) that it afforded little scope for origi-

## Pioneer Foundations

nality. So distinctly was this true that the entire history of the West, during the Pioneer period now under study, will be searched in vain for an example of such an address that stands out as an influence upon the opinion of the time or as giving a larger direction to coming events. The then existing present was as nothing, related as it was by these efforts only to long-past events, or to boasts about a prosperity which while interesting had no real connection with the cheap patriotism that commended achievements with never so much as a practical hint at the duties or perils that lay ahead.

But, in spite of all these drawbacks, the Fourth of July celebration did redeem itself by furnishing these hard-working people at least one opportunity for coming together each year to preserve and maintain some measure of secular social life. It was accompanied by the inevitable firecracker which, before the introduction of more elaborate fireworks, afforded a comparatively harmless way to make a noise. Now and then anvils from the neighboring smithies were charged with powder and fired off, either one by one or in volleys — sometimes without accident or casualty. Its celebration was a picnic in which all the population, male and female, old, middle-aged, and young, after the examples described, took part. There was only the public speaking described; the time had not yet come when, outside the weekly experience meeting or the Sunday open confessional, every American, male or female, was expected to stand up and talk whether or not there was anything worthy of utterance.

## State and County Fairs

### STATE AND COUNTY FAIRS

WITHIN ten years after the settlement of a new county the annual agricultural fair would become a fixed after-harvest event. Being both social and economic, it brought the people from all the townships into relations otherwise impossible and thus tended to break down localism. As it was organized and developed by the most enterprising farmers, each would exhibit his best products; but, quite uniformly they would decline to compete for money or other prizes. Perhaps, in order that this might not seem to be collusive they would accept diplomas or other scraps of paper as certificates of merit. As a rule these fairs were self-sustaining and went on with their work year after year. They attracted some amusing features, like peddlers and fakirs of one sort and another; but they were kept pretty free from gambling or other coarse developments.

It would be safe to say that the American trotting horse and his first cousin the pacer are the products of the county fair. Running horses had lost their vogue owing to their lack of usefulness and the supposed tendency to bet upon them; besides, any country boy could get a race from his neighbor almost without challenge. He had only to put in an appearance upon a straight public road at a time when it was clear and in good condition for a half mile or more and a race was on. But the running gait ceased to be so general when light two-horse vehicles came gradually into use. As a result, the trotter soon had a place of his own. Nobody (man, boy, woman, or girl) would think of riding a trotting horse or of driving a runner. Even a



## Pioneer Foundations

fairly practical animal of all work could be trained to trot at a respectable speed, returning from market with a somewhat heavy farm wagon when any other gait would mean much slower progress.

The county fair, pursuing the policy of paying reasonable premiums or prizes, was able to draw fairly fast horses. When the trotting horse began to be timed for records, a mile in three and a half or four minutes was about the best that was shown. Improvement was so rapid that within the decennial period from 1860 to 1870 this record was brought down in the Pioneer area, and that, too, on somewhat rude county fair grounds, to three minutes and finally by still twenty seconds more, so that "2:40" was long used as a figure of speech to indicate a rapid movement of any kind. It was soon easy to find, in almost every neighborhood, a number of boys whose pairs of three-year-olds could trot on a country road at the rate of a mile in less than four minutes, while examples of such a pair drawing a buggy or a cutter ten or twelve miles an hour, between county seats, twenty-five miles apart, were not unusual. In many other respects the county fairs fully justified themselves both from the entertaining and the useful points of view. They were at once the agricultural college, model farm, and amusement center, and were the promoters of worthy methods of living and of a permanent improvement of conditions.

A prairie fire can hardly be listed among amusements, but it was, at least, both spectacular and dramatic and on occasions it drew out all the men within reach. How such

## Games at School

fires were started was quite as much a mystery as arson is — for there could be next to no doubt, in the majority of cases, what the cause was. The motive was not quite so clear, but in most cases it probably lay in the desire for excitement rather than in anything more ulterior. When such a fire came, it had before it an expanse almost unlimited, without a house, a fence, or other obstruction. It went on until the wind changed, or it had reached its uttermost limits, or the bank of a stream wide enough to check it. As settlement proceeded, precautions were taken against the ravages of such fires by ploughing a wide strip around houses, barns, stock pens, and hay and grain stacks. In many cases this was badly done, or it came too late, so that a fire once started would jump this strip and go on about its only business, which was destruction inside forbidden areas. Then neighbors would turn out and endeavor by setting back fires, or in emergencies by direct fighting, to check its ravages. It was one of the exciting episodes in this life when such a crisis came. In addition to its spectacular interest, it brought into strong relief the qualities incident to helpfulness and coöperation.

### GAMES AT SCHOOL

BUT, IF the Pioneer was little inclined to amuse himself in ways either traditional or new he could not control, as indeed he had no wish to do save on Sunday and at work times, the games of the young. The only exception to this rule was the prohibition of something harmful in itself. So, like Byron's gladiator, he had only to look out and

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"There were his young barbarians all at play." The Pioneer boy did not need any history or handbook of games to tell him of their existence or to teach him how to play them. He, like his predecessors, knew how to employ himself, and as they had done to suggest a change or make an improvement now and then. But in his long romp across half of a continent, he did not devise a game wholly new. The simple Indian games did not much attract although (I suggest this with distinct reserve) ice hockey may perhaps have grown out of lacrosse.

His season for mass play was short, being limited almost wholly, except for swimming, to the school term. He had no regular Saturday half-holiday, though he managed now and then while still too small to make his work valuable to get some surcease on that day. Playing on Sunday, either in groups or singly, was forbidden, and if he could occasionally enjoy stolen sweets they were likely to turn to such bitterness in case of detection that the risk was too serious. Unless he lived in a village, as the majority did not, he had few companions outside his own family. It must be confessed that if he had meagre opportunities he took full advantage of what he had for no other ever had more of Sarah Battle's rigor of the game than the country boy. The ability to work, which was inherited, acquired or enforced, brought with it an energy in play that was almost commanding. He liked leadership which as he knew he could only attain by earning it. The physical force often used by boys to fight their way through with fists to the head of their fellows did not make a

## Games at School

serious appeal to this lad because life itself was so much of a battle that he preferred the easier ways of peace. So, he sought to play his way to the head — being only inclined to fight in order to save his laurels from unfair competition, or to shield a brother or a smaller boy from abuse. He was generous, as all true boys are, in recognition of leadership, and when his turn came he was assertive in claiming what he had earned.

Then, every boy played : actual participation was universal. Even the weak or the crippled could find a place and companions; while by common consent the strong and vigorous might be cast out if he became a bully. There was no room for the mere spectator. Every boy, assigned to his allotted or chosen place, was expected to do his part; otherwise the scheme would be broken up. The playgrounds about the schoolhouse were generally large, out of proportion to the building itself, so that not only every game but every boy could find a place; but unless he desired to be excluded from everything, he must not quarrel, sulk, or hesitate. Some games were naturally inclusive, so that during a recess of a few minutes all might play together. When there was more time at noon or when it could be filched, and when many boys were available, all the games might be going on at the same time — so capacious was the space.

If the boy could not hold his place he was treated just as he was in class — he had to swallow his pride and take lower rank. The average boy learned to play all games and had to accept a tentative position in each until he

## Pioneer Foundations

proved that his prowess entitled him to special recognition. After the leaders were chosen, assignment to place was as democratic as the circumstances permitted; but all standards being based upon actual achievements in the game itself, failure was soon detected. The playground was, indeed, more full of caste than any other branch of the life surrounding these young strugglers. Social position in the community did not necessarily count for much in play; but it was true, nevertheless, that the boys best in work and study generally ruled the playground, and these were almost uniformly drawn from the leading families of the neighborhood.

### *VARIETIES IN BALL GAMES*

NATURALLY, as has been true throughout almost the whole of known history, games of ball were the standbys of boyish play. The principal of these were old cat and rounders which had so shaded into one another that it was often difficult to tell where one began or the other ended — the first name being most in use. Of this there were three kinds, distinguished from each other only by the number of bases or players, the rules being the same for all : two-old-cat with two bases occupied four players; with three bases for six players on a triangular field the name was three-old-cat; while it reached its highest development as four-old-cat around a square field with a catcher who was also the pitcher, on each corner. It was thus adapted to players of any age and lent itself to the minute division of the playground which could be covered with as many

## Varieties in Ball Games

separate games as it would hold. It was of its very essence that every boy should play; there was no place for the onlooker, or fan as the modern jargon has it.

Balls and bats — all highly treasured by their owners — of different weight and size were provided by the players, generally by those most expert. At the opening of a boy's ball career they were made at home by the father, who had seldom forgotten the cunning of youth, or when sufficient age and experience came by the more skillful boys themselves. The balls were made by unravelling the yarn used in woolen socks, generally from those discarded though it is to be feared that many a boy in his eagerness was guilty of raids upon the current hosiery stock of his family. The winding of a ball by hand was an art demanding both skill and patience. For the smaller boys, and for a long time for all, there was nothing in the way of material for the ball proper except this yarn. As they became older, a small wooden ball, sometimes a marble, sometimes a piece of lead, was used as a base to give weight and solidity. When rubber boots and overshoes came into general use, which in this extreme of the then existing West must have been late in the fifties, the rubber from those worn out was cut into strips of varying widths and skillfully worked into the ball between the layers of yarn. Sometimes, a small inner ball would be made from this rubber as a case and covered, the process being repeated with successive layers of the various materials until the proper size and weight had been attained. The completed ball was covered, sometimes with new buckskin sewed very

## Pioneer Foundations

tight, but mostly from the tops of old high boots, or, when available, with their calfskin fronts.

Thus finished with reference to smoothness of seam, a ball was produced of good weight and balance with the flexibility which gave it catching and bouncing qualities, capable of being thrown or knocked long distances, and yet neither heavy enough nor so rigid as to make it painful or dangerous either for catching or pitching. It was available for all real ball games, but only the superior specimens were commonly used in old cat. This game, with its bases adjustable according to age or size, demanded quickness of sight and movement, strength, dexterity in running and dodging, and a high order of skill in both pitching and batting. The boy who had any one of these gifts soon found recognition and was chosen on one side or the other in making up a set of players. These were changed with each day, and the boy with all the gifts soon became by general consent a leader only to be dislodged by superior skill and attainment, no previous service or position counting in the process of deposition or promotion. It was in play as in life : only success counted.

The bats were also home-made, one order of them flat with a short handle somewhat resembling that used in cricket; but, for the most part they were round, from twenty-four to thirty inches long, made with a draw-shave and a pocket knife from the best piece of seasoned white oak that could be found, or from a hickory pole, cut during the winter with the bark left on, thoroughly dried against the day of need, well-balanced to the hand

## Other Games at Ball

of the expected user. There could hardly be a tool better adapted to its purpose. Every good player had his own ball and bat; otherwise he would no more have deemed himself equipped for effective play than if he had undertaken to study without books.

It might be supposed that with such a number of games going on in one field, balls batted beyond the field bounds set would produce many collisions; but this was seldom so, because as there were no outfields the four, six, or eight players were essentially self-contained and thus easily adapted themselves to their own group and to all others. Exhibitions of unfairness or brutality to smaller boys were liable by common consent to bring condign punishment to the offenders, as, characteristic of the American boy, such mates would be forcibly excluded from the game for a fixed period, and if the offense was repeated this penance would be doubled, trebled, imposed without definite limit, or made permanent. The Pioneer boy knew what the boycott meant, and he used it relentlessly long before the gallant Irish captain from whom it was finally given a name was born.

### OTHER GAMES AT BALL

ANOTHER interesting game, generally played with a lighter or softer ball, was known as bull-pen. Catchers, chosen in the same republican way, were stationed at the four corners of a square adjusted in size to the number participating: the weak, the crippled, and the very young, being carefully excluded. When all but the catchers had taken



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their places in the pen, the ball was sent round until the player at each corner had caught it when it was said to be "hot". If a boy missed more than once, or in modern parlance muffed, he was turned into the pen and his place was taken in orderly succession by another. When the throwing and catching process had been repeated with success, the last catcher could hurl the ball into the ring, which he generally did with many flourishes and all the force at his command, at the moving, daring, bustling crowd, generally aimed at some particular boy. If he missed entirely, his intended victim took his place. If another was hit he had the right to catch the ball or to get it if he could; if not, it was open to all. As the catchers moved rapidly on straight lines from one base to another, any of them might be hit or crossed out, in which case the successful thrower took his place on the vacant base while the former holder found refuge in the pen. It was an exciting game, where every boy had his chance; but it was the roughest of the ball exercises then practiced. A mean or revengeful boy could often wreak his temper or his animosity upon a smaller boy or an enemy with less danger of detection than anywhere else. Many boys were hurt, though seldom seriously, because the rules were severe about throwing at the head.

Another game was known as Antonyover. Under its rules the players, divided into two equal chosen parts, were stationed on opposite sides of the schoolhouse, or other building where unseen by each other they threw over the ball, calling out "Antonyover". If some one caught the

## Marbles and Wrestling

ball and touched the thrower or other player, the person touched had to go to the other side and thus the process would continue until the number had been so depleted that it was no longer possible to sustain the unequal contest, when they would choose up anew and begin again. As thus described such a game would not seem to give much scope for skill, but it was surprising how much of this gift the smaller boys, who generally played it, would develop.

These games, different though they seem from each other, were all steps in the evolution of baseball and its final elevation to the rank of a national game. In some of their forms, and in some places, they were not far removed from their successor in the rigidity and complexity of rules and were superior to it in that they made every boy an active figure and not a looker-on. They lacked in the violence which has come to distinguish the national game: this is no doubt the reason for the comparative lack of participation and the modern tendency to watch others play.

Football, though an old and settled game, was not known nor was bowls or lawn tennis; while golf and polo had never been heard of. This narrow range of choice no doubt tended to promote the keenness with which the few games were played and accounts for the almost universal interest in them.

### MARBLES AND WRESTLING

WHEN spring came, marbles was the other game that was

## Pioneer Foundations

quite universally played both at home and at school. In the latter, this game, too, lent itself to the subdivision into groups whose number was limited only by the capacity of the playground. There was hardly a boy so small that he did not have in his pocket a bag full of marbles distributed between commas, alleys, glass, porcelain, agates, and all the varieties then known. He boasted his share of bowlers, taws, and bulls' eyes, knew all the mysteries of knuckle and knuckle-down (between which there was a world of difference) protested against inching and punching, watched the deadline with unwavering eye and determination, insisted upon the toeing of the mark, played with more or less cheerfulness when he lost at keeps, and chuckled when he won. The marbles, carried in a bag in the pocket, had during school hours many elusive qualities : falling on the floor they held many possibilities of exposure and of the consequent trouncing or donning of a dunce cap or other corrective exercise, especially if the teacher was old enough to have forgotten his own boyish days.

A real boy would do anything that offered to get money for marbles; he would work after or before ordinary hours, care for any number of babies in or out of the family, churn, take horses to water, or drive cows to pasture, run errands at a speed quite out of the ordinary, in fine, as an encourager of effort, they were almost equal to a promise to go swimming, or to the circus. Marbles was among the most contentious of all games. While there was much admiration for brilliant achievement, there scarcely was a shot that did not elicit a storm of protests before and

## Marbles and Wrestling

complete explanations afterwards about the reasons why it had either succeeded or failed. In this respect, it was a worthy forerunner of croquet and almost the equal of a whist quartette containing two female chatterers each resolved to explain at length every play she had made out of the sequence of thirteen. As a barometer of human nature and boy nature, few things in life were so accurate as the promise of a bag of marbles. As no boy was too small to play so none ever became so large that he outgrew it.\*

Wrestling, whether among men at a picnic, around the smithy, the store, or the mill, or among boys at school, was about the only game to attract spectators. It was generally the resort near the end of a long play spell, perhaps after the first bell had rung with only a few spare minutes — no smallest fraction of which must be lost. It was then that the most expert would get into action and it so lent itself to support and enthusiasm that everybody was keen to see the result. It was an exciting few moments, mostly good-natured; but, if the contestants happened to be two rough fellows it might end in a real fist-cuff which would not only add to the interest of the moment but arouse high hopes of even greater excitement when a bit later the fighters would have to face an angry teacher. Most of the wrestling was less a matter of skill

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\* The writer's last personal contact with the game occurred, just before reaching his majority, when he and some classmates went out into the country near Iowa City to play it in the interval between University recitations. Many men recurred to it even when much older.

## Pioneer Foundations

than of strength in the winner or awkwardness in the loser; but, whatever the deciding elements, everybody wanted to see it.

Jumping had something of the same quality with less of the danger of clashing. In this sport a number of contests of different kinds of jumps would be going on at the same time so that more boys would be engaged but the school interest was general in something that had of necessity to be selective. Neither wrestling nor jumping was taught or known scientifically but an amount of energy and strength were thrown into them to maintain the interest of a people without many opportunities outside of grinding labor to exhibit their physical skill or strength.

The old swimmin' hole was universal. How so much water could be found in such small streams was one of the wonders of the time and of boyhood days. There was always enough to enable a group to find facilities for swimming, diving, racing, and all the diversions incident to this exercise. Few boys came into manhood without a fair degree of expertness in the water.

### RUNNING AND OTHER SCHOOL GAMES

THE PIONEER never walked as a method of amusing himself when he could ride a horse or run. This made running one of the standard school sports and the games, other than ball, into which it entered were too various to fix themselves on the memory or to warrant description. Races were of all orders and conditions, for boys of every age and size. They ranged between laid-out courses only a

## Running and Other School Games

few yards in length, or through elaborate and calculated zigzags to wild flights of many miles over bottom or prairie, or through timber.

Quickness of getting under way or stopping, ability to see short-cuts, obedience to the word of command, speed, endurance, confidence, and originality all entered into the tests which a strong boy with a gift for running might impose upon himself. Whatever the difference in skill, however successful or unsuccessful he might be, nothing could damp the ardor of such a boy. It was a sport which, open to all, could be indulged by few or many in all kinds of weather without the necessity for any special organization, or the choosing of partners. It was a free for all with no material rewards, except glory for the foremost, and no penalties, other than ridicule for the hindmost. Some of the exhibited powers, especially in endurance, would have been creditable to any people from the Spartans downward, and they served to try the stamina and the patience of boys who, to the ordinary thought, would have neither need nor willingness to engage themselves in anything so violent.

Walking on stilts was a common school amusement early or late in the term when the attendance of playable boys would be at its lowest. It was not a game to be taught; it had to be learned. Beginning with home-made or self-made stilts which put him only a few inches above the ground, the boy would gradually increase their height, as skill and confidence developed, until he would find himself elevated by from four to six feet and stepping, in an

## Pioneer Foundations

awkward lumbering way, over fences, logs, or other hurdles, or making exhibitions of himself in his slow progress through snow two or three feet deep. The rivalry often caused many a fall, comparable only to that of Humpty Dumpty; but this seldom brought serious injury and never produced discouragement.

The top was a simple thing mostly made at home from a discarded spool whose bareness was eagerly awaited and perhaps sometimes promoted by a premature loss of thread, greatly to the mother's amazement. The art of spinning it (it was almost wholly a home game) was not highly developed, the absence of eligible floors or level places counting as much in this result as the absence of proper cords for its manipulation. It was set spinning by the finger and thumb so that persistence and strength of arm and hand were more needed than art or skill.

In spite of the fact that he had all outdoors before him in which to fly it, the kite did not appeal with any large degree of success to the Pioneer schoolboy. Lack of material and knowledge in making it were important elements; and the difficulty of getting sufficient string was another; but the principal drawbacks were its loneliness and individuality and the fact that it took so much time and required so many unsuccessful trials that it taxed the patience. In this country a game must play itself out quickly or it does not fit into the American temperament. This is shown by the fact that almost all the slow games, once practiced, have disappeared, and that none of this kind, however successful elsewhere, has ever been completely naturalized.

## Bows, Arrows, and Darts

### BOWS, ARROWS, AND DARTS

ONLY THE best equipped boys who had passed the age of ten or twelve acquired an effective quality of bows and arrows. No wood that ever grew was better adapted than the hickory for making a fine quality of bow whether it was plain, as used by the Indian, or of the older variety on a stock, known as the cross-bow. Its fashioning was a labor of love to an ingenious father and both the pleasure of the boy and its effectiveness for hitting a mark were dependent upon the skill of this amateur worker in wood. The arrows were cut from the same wood or from oak, had no metal points, and required an amount of fashioning that made them precious and their loss grievous. As few were able to enter a competition, and because of a certain peril archery was more in the nature of a quiet or private sport; but it promoted a goodly order of skill that required strength of arm and keenness of eye. Occasionally an arrow would be used to kill a squirrel, rabbit, or quail, and still more rarely a wild duck, or goose, or a prairie chicken, though it was seldom that such wary birds could be approached within bow-shot.

Akin to this sport, although simpler and much less accurate, was the casting of darts which, together with the simple necessary thrower, were generally made by boys themselves. They either worked to pattern, or were instructed by fathers or mates. I do not recall that these articles in wood were ever made to order by the village carpenter or kept on hand for sale. They were somewhat out of his line and there was no other mechanic or armour-



## Pioneer Foundations

er whose business it was to supply such wants. While less exact in the results attained than in archery there was art in making a well-balanced dart and much skill had to be acquired in order to send it up into the air three or four hundred yards and have it come down on its point within such bounds that it should not be lost. Such a dart, fashioned with a pocket knife, would be deemed precious and would serve as a model for many mates or successors. Probably no city boy, whatever his resources, could have bought like instruments, made with any such cleverness, or could have manipulated them with the success of these remote Pioneer boys who seldom had a cent in their pockets.

### *THE CULT OF THE POCKET KNIFE*

THE ART of making what are known to history as willow-wand whistles was an inheritance of the Pioneer boy. The amount of time and ingenuity expended upon them and their success as noisemakers or warning givers were unquestioned. He not only used willows for this purpose but other woods with a tough bark were laid under requisition. A whistle, somewhat more fragile, was sometimes made from the bluestem grass or even heavy straws from a swamp plant somewhat resembling the bulrush. It would be difficult to recount all the ingenious noise-making devices this boy was able to fashion for his own amusement, or the annoyance of elders. It may be assumed with safety that, aside from all he would imitate or read about, his powers of invention were seldom at a loss. He made,

## The Cult of the Pocket Knife

out of the box elder, popguns of varying calibre and range, which would sometimes arouse a school just in its hour of greatest quiet and intensity with noises that would bring fear to small children, rage to the teacher, and joy to his confederates. His squirt guns, made from the same materials, would throw across a schoolroom a spray of water that would awaken a dozing girl or other student, or a tired, confiding teacher seeking a moment of ease.

No reference to these various articles (only a few out of many would be complete) without a tribute to the pocketknife, whether in the hands of an active boy or a busy man plying his art for a useful purpose. What either of them could not make in the way of a small article in wood has never been disclosed. As there was no teaching either of drawing or of designing in clay, the pocket knife furnished almost the only method of displaying an artistic gift. In the main, practice with it was devoted to the useful; but in much of the work there was a grace of pattern and a perfection of finish that might well have had its inspiration among the far-famed workers of Oberammergau, or Nuremberg, or Switzerland. Matches in the village street, where chartered loafers would compete for hours with each other in a mere idle whittling of the storekeeper's discarded dry goods boxes, or, in their absence, a dry basswood stick, or a fence plank, were a weekly, sometimes a daily (Sundays excepted) exhibition. This habit had come down from Jamestown, Plymouth, Manhattan, and Philadelphia in unbroken succession. After the railroad reached the ever-expanding frontiers, whittling was the

## Pioneer Foundations

accepted amusement or occupation when the simple and idle part of the population went to the station to see the train pass through.\*

### LAP-JACKET—NOW A LOST GAME

ONE SPORT, in knowledge of which the dictionary and encyclopedia makers seem to be deficient, was the lap-jacket, nearly always practiced at school. Two boys of about equal size or strength, sometimes as the result of a quarrel or dare, but generally with the utmost friendliness, would agree to settle their differences or establish their superiority by this exercise. Each would cut for himself about a half dozen smart switches sufficient, in his view, for his purposes. These were generally of the lithe, flexible willow, though sometimes the hazel or even the branches of an elm. Keeping on their coats, but discarding any garment resembling a vest or other underjacket, each would take the other by the left hand and begin the game. They were not to loose hands until one or the other said "enough". If one switch broke or wore out the contestant was entitled to have a new one from a friendly bystander,

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\* This custom still prevails in remote districts in southern Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, as may be observed by a wide-awake traveler on other than the through expresses of the great trunk line roads. It especially applies, as indicated, to those railroads which pass through sparsely-settled districts, still affected, as in their earlier days, by the poor white, who, wherever he is, or wherever he lives among the successive generations of men, is the same immutable, irredeemable specimen of the useless and the ornery that his ancestors were even long before they were transported from seventeenth century slums in the days of King James or his successors and in the stormy times of the Protector.

## Lap-Jacket Now a Lost Game

of whom there were two who acted both as attendants and umpires — something akin to seconds in a duel.

The rules forbade strokes on the head or the legs — the body, under the jacket, being the only anatomical area of permitted assault. The game would begin rather quietly, or tentatively, but each would soon warm to the task, blows would come harder and swifter and, as they began to tell, the whipping would be fast and furious. It was not unusual for this voluntary punishment to be kept up for half an hour, often until all the switches were worn out or the contestants had exhausted themselves. No serious effects were ever known to come from this stoical game; but it had in it the elements of cruelty and so could only be practiced against severe prohibitions. It bore a certain relation to that corporal punishment so common in its day; it was interesting to note that it was seldom indulged in, with its due rigor, by boys who came from homes under the rule of severe fathers and by still fewer of those inured to the blows so persistently administered by the occasional cruel stepmother.

Strength of voice and its penetrative power were everywhere elements in the Pioneer life. The calls for each other as neighbors, or for workers in a field for dinner, for the ferryman, even those made for all kinds of animals, connected as they were with great empty spaces where no others could hear, made the use of the voice a convenience if not a necessity. This was largely cultivated by boys on their playgrounds in their communications with each other and in their own homes. Much pride was shown in the

## Pioneer Foundations

management and control of the voice, without any artificial aids, and there can be no doubt that in addition to the dryness of the air this element employed not only for use but for amusement had something to do with the loud and rasping tendency noted in our earlier years; a reproach not yet entirely removed.

### HOME-MADE PLAYTHINGS

NO REFERENCE to Pioneer sports would be complete that did not emphasize the ingenuity of the Pioneer father in the devising and making of playthings for children. Balls, bats, sleds, wagons, whips and whipstocks, bows and arrows, darts, whistles for the boys, doll-houses (the mother generally provided rag dolls for the girls) together with practically every device then known for amusing or interesting children had either to be made at home or to be left out of the young lives. This process had already gone on for six or seven generations so that a certain aptness had become traditional. The older boys soon caught some idea of this secret and were able to take up the task for themselves and the younger children in their own or other families in the neighborhood. Sometimes this kind of work would be done for others, the less skillful man giving something in return so that in most families, outside the wretchedly poor, somebody would be afforded at least a glimpse of those gifts which were making their way into the older parts of the country. As these toys were used up in one family they would be passed on like schoolbooks to those otherwise deprived of such helps in that universal

## Home-Made Playthings

business of childhood known as play. There was no Christmas, hence no Santa Claus; but the making of presents at New Year's was not uncommon, though far from universal. In some way, recondite and often mysterious, by daily contact rather than on special occasions, some semblance of seasonal joy was brought to the minds of the children.

The story of sports, both for children and adults, relates itself almost wholly to males. The separation of the sexes in school, church, and play, was so strict, the girl was so thrown back upon the limitations of sex and the Pioneer woman was so closely beleaguered in her own house that she had little time or strength, even if she had had inclination, to take any decided part in games or diversions. Her natural spirit of sacrifice was satisfied when her children were amused or interested. The time was one so distinctly devoted to the outdoors that the very diversions of the household woman, her unbending with her associates, had in them the great motive of usefulness, seldom of play for its own sake.

The great variety of games and exercises to which a girl now has access would have seemed to the Pioneer woman not so much improper as discordant with the mission of her sex. Besides, it must be borne in mind that men have so long practiced games that they are expected to devise as well as play them. It would, perhaps, be difficult to name any game that was invented by a woman and then applied to and by her sex. Sport, like war, seems somehow to have been the business of the self-assumed lords of creation.

## Pioneer Foundations

### COLD WEATHER AMUSEMENTS

THERE was a larger scope for amusements or sports in the winter than in summer. Advantage was taken of this fact on Saturdays and in the long evenings after early supper. Skating never became anything like the universal favorite that might be supposed. The snows were heavy, the average streams were small (at low water not more than forty or fifty feet wide at most) and, in most cases, they were somewhat distant from the village center. Lakes were non-existent, ponds were few, and where there were larger streams the bottoms on one side were so wide and the bluffs on the other so high that few people could live near enough to enjoy the superior facilities they furnished for ice sports. Now and then the ice would be cleaned for some space on the small tributaries or flooded by day for night use; but as neither process was at all general, skating was restricted mainly to the young who might have a passion for it. For some part of the winter the roads were almost as smooth as rinks so that a good many enthusiasts among boys would sometimes skate to school and back.

But the great use that was made of cold weather, so far as pleasure was concerned, was in sleighing in large parties of twenty or thirty in a sled to which, whether on single or double runners, the wagon bed or the hay rack had been transferred. Filled with straw or hay and plentifully supplied with wraps, mainly large buffalo robes (sold for from five to ten dollars each) supplemented by blankets or coverlets, these sleds drawn by four well-shod horses loaded down with jingling bells provided an outing which

## Cold Weather Amusements

was a merry and noisy one — perhaps the most potent promoter of courtship and marriage known to this early life. Often it was merely a drive covered by an out-and-back journey of from fifteen to twenty miles; sometimes, during the continued ban upon the dance, it meant a visit to a party of friends in another township or county; still oftener, it carried its merry company to a challenged or return spelling match with a neighboring school where, under the two teachers, all would participate.

This sport perhaps reached its highest development in the light two-horse sleigh, or the one-horse cutter. In the manipulation of these great skill was developed, both in drivers and horses, as it was sometimes difficult to manage them without mishap in the narrow roads bordered over their whole length with deep snow drifts.

These various forms of snow vehicles were almost wholly of home make. For business as well as for pleasure sleds, care was taken to save the small crooked trees or limbs, cut them to the proper thickness either by hand or at the sawmill, and then, at great pains, fashion them into the necessary uniformity, in pairs for single sleds, and in fours for bobsleds as the double ones were called. The foundation thus assured, work, skill, and patience shaped them into presentable or practical form. Coming from the hands of such a variety of makers, they were often crude, perhaps heavier and certainly more awkward than necessary; but many would take on graceful forms that would have merited recognition anywhere as an application of the artistic to the useful. In some neighborhoods the wagon-



## Pioneer Foundations

maker turned his attention to sleds and, in many cases, his products were excellent in quality and attractive in appearance. In the earliest days of our period, over the whole Pioneer area, neither iron nor steel was to be spared for soles, so the ever useful, hard, smooth hickory as a substitute performed another of its almost innumerable functions. Long before the end these metals came into use for both runners and frames and another time-honored local occupation passed away.

The hand sled, at first a product of the skill of the head of the family but taken up for himself by the handy boy early in his active career, was the one universal toy, far more general in distribution, owing to the greater leisure to use it, than the hand wagon. It was made in almost every form from the product incident to nailing two boards together with cleats up to the elaborate light hand bobsled adjusted for tobogganing parties; but its most common form was with runners cut from crooked trees and made with much solidity. Grace was not always absent even here; but what the Pioneer boy, with rough roads and his overplus of strength and energy, most needed was solidity : something that would stand wear and any kind of treatment.

The banks of the small streams, with their long and sometimes receding bluffs were used for sledding parties whenever time permitted. In connection with the long path opened at their bottoms in the ice of the stream, there was ready for use, with no cost except the cheerful labor of many, toboggan slides which the more pretentious ice

## Cold Weather Amusements

sports of Switzerland and Canada might well have envied. When they could be enjoyed by the light of lanterns fitted with greasy, flickering candles, or in the occasional respites from chores or revival meetings, memories of the hard work of the previous summer, premonitions of the next year's tasks, or reflections on the gloom of Sunday when this amusement was forbidden, would all alike disappear, and the Pioneer boy would enjoy moments of happiness perhaps surpassing anything the future might bring him.

For many boys, the hand sled was an inevitable accompaniment to school in the morning, every little descent giving him a lift, or the privilege of hitching it to a passing sled with perhaps an occasional chance, either going or coming, to filch a few moments for the river bank and its icy toboggan.



PIONEER QUALITIES AND CUSTOMS



## TAKING LIFE SERIOUSLY

IN SPITE of theories or appearance, individual leadership was the outstanding quality of this Pioneer life. Nothing went on or forward without it, even if neither leaders nor followers were conscious of its working or its existence. It proceeded on accepted lines, but when it tended to fall into formulas it naturally lost much of its virtue as leadership. But, even if the people were much alike, still the circumstances were so different as to make it a necessity; they had not only to conquer the earth within the limits chosen or assigned to them, to give it population, to put it into relations with the outside world, to make their own educational systems, and to adapt religious conditions to their immediate needs, but they had to assimilate outlying contiguous districts.

Only in this way could they fortify their own power and influence against the days to come. They never forgot that these other days were to come and that they had serious duties and obligations to meet in providing for them. They thus soon became something more than the mere political and social crucibles they were supposed to be, into which every kind of raw and undigested material could safely be poured. They became, of a sudden and almost unconsciously, the holders of power in the life as well as in the government of a great series of growing neighborhoods.

## Pioneer Foundations

Although they had to live in isolation, they were at least remote from the narrow intrigues and jealousies which so weakened their contemporaries in other countries. They were left free to mature in a quiet way, even more restful than their more cultivated and sophisticated countrymen farther to the eastward, and thus to prepare themselves for the supreme crisis that, unconsciously for them and for all, was approaching. These people were so rooted to the soil that there was no other place for them to go, nothing was left for them but to make the best of the land itself. There was no gold either to seek or to find, no peltry whose pursuit could be made a serious object, no manufacture, no commerce, domestic or foreign, and no wars to turn them aside from their single object.

### INTEREST IN A STRONG SIMPLE LIFE

WHATEVER the polish that may come to a people with age and experience, however high they may rank themselves in civilization, they never lose their interest in the struggles of their Pioneer forerunners. The story of their own simple beginnings, however remote they may be, does not tire them. This recurrence to youth in a people is only the expression of the feeling that is found in every wholesome person. Surviving as it exists in each individual, this sentiment retains, however unconsciously, its hold upon the collective forces that make up society. The gift of recalling youth, with its warm impulses, its quick-flowing blood, its lack of caution, its keen outlook upon the coming days that nothing can foreshadow, its desire to tempt

## Interest in a Strong Simple Life

a fate wholly hid in the mists of the future, consolidates itself into the ideas of a whole people, and memory thus enters into the very heart of its life.

This sentiment may no more find formal expression than each individual may feel called upon to set down in writing the recollections that throng upon him. This great growth of human life, now so broadened that its influence is felt everywhere, has had no adequate study, nothing to reveal its workings. It lies concealed from view and, as in all lost phases of human history, it can never be recovered. Like everything that has preceded it anywhere, its full story must remain forever untold. The narrative would be too long for human study, to say nothing of human narration.

Thus nothing outward or formal can reveal the inherent strength of these people, coming out as it constantly did in some form. They did not take life lying down. In their theology, politics, literature, or social development they illustrated the same vigor that distinguished them in pioneering and was to be shown in war. If, by any chance, they read a novel, a poem, or a history they wanted life and movement in it. Their religion and their politics, like every phase of their outward lives, were of the fighting type. They were as far from pacifists as from bullies or blackguards. As a result, they were interesting because everything human interested them.

They went on creating comfort, but waste no more came within their thought than did the desire for idle luxury. With changes in taste, with material growth, there was



## Pioneer Foundations

an absence of show and ostentation which was one of the conspicuous triumphs of the time. What the earth and industry produced was used in its wholesome abundance and the overplus, under such a system of economy, was devoted to the further development of hidden resources — thus promoting the public good. This process, sedulously applied, explains that multiplication (the word increase does not describe it with any adequateness) of material values which now seems to the world so astounding. It is only a partial requital for the obvious labor, manual and mental, the watchfulness, the concern for their immediate present and for an undefined, distant future that had entered into the human expenditure thus made. At no period of history, nor in any part of the world, has the aggregate financial reward that has come in the end, however large it might seem, repaid so much as the tithe of a return of the effort involved in the thought and labor expended upon it. The world, in any given or accepted present, always owes to the past a debt so large that no sacrifice or effort can repay any considerable part of it. Only through recognition of the needs of the future and of the duty to those who must yet come into existence can any fair return be made for the bounties of nature as developed by the labor of men.

### INDIVIDUALISM AND SECLUSION

IN THEMSELVES these people were individualists of a highly developed type. The necessity for self-protection and self-preservation, the compulsion to associate with them-

## Individualism and Seclusion

selves as persons and to find in seclusion the company otherwise denied, had bred a gloom that was saddening to many and hurtful to the mass; but in the best, in those who were so constituted that they could bear up under its burdens, they also had bred a confidence almost unknown to history elsewhere in their ability to make their own way out. This quality, developed to the verge of exaggeration or extravagance, drove them into the necessity for so adapting collectivism that they could coöperate with their fellows and bring out the qualities of the whole. They developed a taciturnity of such a character that, if they thought of a thing in one minute, they were likely without talk to attempt or to do it in the next.

The resulting character, without any relation to dogma, to individual or credal opinion, or any human achievement, without question as to what had been done in the past or to what might be done in the future, was essentially and incurably Puritan in the larger sense that this word connotes. It was devoted to an object, or a series of objects, and pursued them with a courage and persistence that nothing could change or modify. It illustrated a human quality seen in the Stoic, wherever and whenever he has appeared among men whether crass Paganism ruled, or in the midst of the most exalted mysticism, or under still more prosaic conditions.

But in spite of this, the foundation quality, the outstanding fact, in this Pioneer life was not its seclusion, both enforced and voluntary, or its hardness, but the fact that these produced or encouraged a belief amounting to a faith,

## Pioneer Foundations

often narrow, sometimes almost fanatical, in its mission to do a great and commanding service to humanity. It was confined to a physical environment that was uninviting, and its representatives lived in surroundings of more than Spartan simplicity; but these produced an industry and an independence, a self-reliance and an ambition that enabled them to conquer difficulties and emerge in a triumph that is one of the distinctive tests of human character. In the end, they were not only to register material victories, but to assimilate those great achievements which knowledge only can bring to mankind. Behind these lie the character known in an indefinite way as Anglo-Saxon. Only its courage and assertiveness, its progressiveness, curbed always by its ingrained conservatism and its untiring pursuit of an object, could have produced a people able and willing to accept such penalties so that posterity might enjoy the highest material rewards that men can find. Its qualities had become an instinct more than a conscious idea or purpose. Often crude, always restless, though never in a hurry, never to be beaten when it set out to reach a goal, it absorbed alien elements without giving them power, social position, or even recognition, and without accepting their standards. The career of the Pioneer, whether on the American scene or any other, is the culminating success of this character — more wonderful because the more universal than modern history has otherwise developed.

### THE PREVALENCE OF HOPE

IN THIS early day discontent was almost a negligible ele-

## The Prevalence of Hope

ment in this life. It was the youth, not alone of most of the individuals concerned, but it was a people just in its beginnings. It was the time of hope when happiness, progress, and liberty were the watchwords which defined the sought-for goals. Not much thought was given to injury or to the wreaking of revenge upon some supposed enemy in individual or class. The necessity for effort and struggle was so universal that artificiality was lost sight of. Under the workings of the accepted theories of an equality whose truth nobody presumed to question, every individual had his chance and if he failed to use it the fault did not lie in social systems or methods of administration but in him. Thus, men accepted their assignments in the social firmament and made places for themselves or failed with little room for envy, hatred, or uncharitableness.

It was a time when, in spite of narrow surroundings, the great majority, satisfied with their form of government and sincere in their profession of faith, were not looking for other theories or doctrines either destructive or constructive. Inside their accepted ideas, there was a hunger for knowing things, for understanding the world and its meanings, for doing the work that, within these limitations, lay at their hands; but it was not the fashion to dream about some impossible object as a child might cry for the moon. There was no occasion, according to the then current philosophy, for hunger, while poverty was not a word for their vocabularies. As a class discontent with lot or position was almost wholly absent. Perhaps it existed for a time among the returned soldiers of the Civil War,

## Pioneer Foundations

due mainly to the fact that many unworthy men had been promoted to command in large and small offices; but, when new and unexpected opportunities were opened by the events through which such dissatisfied men had themselves passed this soon disappeared as a potent force in life.

The American Pioneer, perhaps more than almost any class over so long a period of the world's history, lived in the ideal, in the future, not of some coming or outside world, but of that in which he found himself. He had a firm faith in the institutions he had inherited. His hardships were lightened and his life sweetened by his firm belief that, come what might, he and his children were part of the enginery by which the world was moved and was to be regenerated. He was not, therefore, inclined to grumble at the petty miseries about him, or to see in those of larger scope the hand of some man or class waiting to injure or betray him, or to eat up his substance. He was an optimist in reality not merely by profession.

### INGRAINED POLITENESS OF THE TIME

IN THE hurly-burly of our modern life, with its mixture of populations and the intensity of the struggle for existence, there is little knowledge and less appreciation of the rooted, ingrained courtesy and politeness that had come down in unbroken succession first through the colonist and then into the life of the American Pioneer. No isolation, remoteness, hardship, no seeming injustice or neglect by people or authority in the original population sources could change this rooted urbanity, or its forms of ex-

## Ingrained Politeness of the Time

pression. All along the course of our history these qualities (the characteristics of an old society, the thoughtfulness that had been generated in the days of chivalry, itself the most distinctive triumph of the Christian spirit) were always in evidence. This definite grace of manner was both inherited and inherent. If it was sometimes hid under a rude exterior or developed in untoward surroundings, its survival and cultivation enabled its possessors to use it and never to forget either what it meant or what it was. It was not sporadic, coming into evidence in an older settlement to be lost before its next offshoot was reached : it pervaded them all. Its existence in New England has been made known by one revelation after another. It was found in New York under the conditions incident to recent conquest or change of authority as was shown by a letter written in 1668 by Governor Francis Lovelace to King Charles II.\*

The existence of this spirit in Pennsylvania and the older Southern colonies was always in evidence; while the history of Tennessee and Kentucky reveals its presence, however rough the outward seemings, in those early outlying communities. Two early expressions by English travelers of this attention to the amenities in the new districts between the Allegheny and the Mississippi serve to reveal it under even more discouraging conditions and at a still later date.

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\* I find some of these people have the breeding of courts and I cannot conceive how such was acquired.

## Pioneer Foundations

But what is most at variance with English notions of the American people, is the urbanity and civilization that prevails in situations remote from large cities. In our journey from Norfolk, on the coast of Virginia, to this place, in the heart of the Alleghany Mountains, we have not for a moment lost sight of the manners of polished life. Refinement is unquestionably far more rare than in our mature and highly cultivated state of society, but so is extreme vulgarity. In every department of common life, we here see employed persons superior in habits and education to the same class in England. — Morris Birkbeck's *Notes on a Journey in America* (1818), p. 40.

There is more genuine kindness and politeness among these back-woodsmen, than among any set of people, I have yet seen in America. They know so well the value of good neighbourhood, and feel so independent of the laws and restraints of every kind. Each man has a consciousness of power to do good or evil. Thus he is polite, for the same reason that the most powerful animals are gentle. — Elias P. Fordham's *Personal Narrative*, p. 145.

### FOUNDATIONS FOR COURTESY

THIS underlying foundation of good manners was most conspicuous in the treatment of women who were looked upon as something higher than even the best human being in masculine form. Even in the home, with its inevitable hardships and exacting toil, the husband was almost uniformly thoughtful in relieving the wife from the heaviest of her burdens, while the boys were not only taught to show this respect, but from their earliest days long before they were fitted by age and strength for outdoor work they became recognized aids of the mother, a process which continued in spare time well into the teens of life. The girls were taught that their duty to themselves lay in the learning and doing of household work, but that there was still a higher obligation to their families: that of saving the mother every unnecessary step.

## Foundations for Courtesy

Nothing was thought so to mark the worthlessness of a husband as when he permitted his wife to be left without fuel for the day's use, or when she was forced in the more primitive times to carry water from the nearby stream for household use. Many such man has had warning served upon him by watchful neighbors (who then stood in the relation now assumed by government) that, unless he mended his ways in this respect, he would call down upon himself punitive visitations. It was not at all unusual, when such warning was not heeded, for the offenders to find out how sharp the edges of a rail could be made, or to know the penalties of exile in spite of the added work thus thrown upon the interlopers in doing for the neglected wife the work in which her husband had failed. These Pioneer men made no claim to angelic gifts, but they had in them the essential qualities of gentlemen.

The second outstanding expression of good manners was the respect shown to elders. "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head and honor the face of the old man" was quite as distinctly one of the commandments as if it had been revealed directly to Moses on the Mount. This duty was impressed upon children from their earliest days so that they were expected to greet elders with respect: a bow, a doffing of the hat, a salute of some kind being given and as surely returned as by a general to one of his soldiers. Nor was this limited to the same rank or caste in life. It was a part of the courtesy of the times, and children who did not know or recognize this duty put themselves outside the pale of consideration.



## Pioneer Foundations

Many of the older men and women in each neighborhood were quite generally known as "uncle" or "aunt" — generally those with grown-up children, though sometimes those with none at all. This was not resented as a familiarity but welcomed as showing a kindly thought for others. It was not dependent upon gifts or favors other than those related to good will for everybody. If disrespect to elders was shown by rude children there were plenty of protagonists to resent and avenge the insult. Respect was often enforced with knuckles by some freckled barefoot boy who looked upon his act as no more than a part of the day's work for which no special credit was claimed or due.

In every family of standing care was taken to teach table manners. The respectful attention until the blessing was asked by father or mother, the patient waiting of a turn to be helped, the taking of what was given and eating it all without question or protest, if not granted voluntarily, were enforced. Spratt-like, the plate upon which a meal was served must be left clean. It was in the days when the girl help and the hired man sat at the table along with the family; when all were treated alike, except the youngest who was helped first and favored with what he wanted; when all waited upon each and each upon all; and yet the attention to politeness was genuine, even if napkins were unknown, or there was only one knife and one fork, one spoon, plate, glass, or cup for each.

Except in times of harvest or other stress of work there was much interesting talk; but children were expected to listen unless spoken to. Wonder is often expressed why

## The Little Acts of Kindness

it is that the real peasant type, when its representatives go out into the world, retains so many boorish characteristics while American farm boys and girls easily adjust themselves to their new surroundings whatever the refinements may be. The reason is simple : these boys and girls are not peasants but belong to the classes who have made our life what it is, regardless of outward trappings, and have little to learn except unimportant details.

### THE LITTLE ACTS OF KINDNESS

IN THOSE times and places the old-fashioned kindly greetings had neither gone out of fashion nor become matters of carelessness or contempt. It was part of the etiquette of the time that no person, however busy, hurried, rich, important, or obscure, should fail to greet every other in the highway, whether riding, driving, walking, going to school or church, or in any other employment. Failure to do so was at least contemptuous, almost insulting, and required explanation or apology.

One of the things that young people who went out into the world found almost impossible of understanding was the coldness of attitude which they encountered. The habit had become so ingrained that many such a person as he grew older would go into the country where his traditional courtesy might find its usual outlet or recognition. Attention to this formality was due not merely to habit or to the curiosity so common in life; it was inspired by genuine good will, the only element that makes any system of manners worth having or observing. The same motive lay back

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of the lift given to the man, woman, or child walking in the road. Such a favor was unsolicited; it was deemed a part of the duty one human being owed to another. If there was, anywhere, a person, old or young, who did not adjust himself to the system, he was put down as a hopeless curmudgeon and his place in that little world was fixed in accordance with this unrepealable judgment.

These things were not taken as matters of course but commanded the respectful recognition which they merited. The give and take of life had their fixed place in the human scheme and were so adjusted that they balanced each other. The children who grew up in this atmosphere of respect and politeness had many advantages over the careless manners which distinguished their successors. They had in life a recognized place that early brought them a knowledge of men and a confidence that were of much use when they took their places in the religious, political, business, or social activities of their time. They had not emerged unduly out of the premature conditions that made them blasé or old beyond their years. They had the training and the opportunities that fitted their age and development; the rest was assured growth into new outlets for which they were fairly prepared by heredity or environment, but, most of all, by a discipline that served them in every time of need.

### *AMERICAN CURIOSITY FOUND EVERYWHERE*

ONE of the human traits that found most fruitful development in the American colonist, and in his successor the

## American Curiosity Found Everywhere

Pioneer, was a curiosity that nothing could quench or satisfy. Secluded as he was, leading, unwillingly but by the very necessity of existence a retired, almost a hermit life, he wanted to know almost to the verge of inquisitiveness everything that could be learned or made available about his neighbor or the chance passer-through or the visitor to his neighborhood. It was not offensive, or from any desire to pry into the concerns of others; it was a reaction from the intensity of his loneliness, from the very exaggeration of the fact that after all he was a human being to whom association was necessity. He had no other way of acquainting himself with the great outside world which somewhere, distant, mysterious, full of interest and novelty really existed for him. He knew little about it but this in no way wiped it from the tablets of his brain, however narrow it may have been. He could not go out into its busy precincts and explore its mysteries; but he could use the few opportunities that came under his own eye.

He entertained, generally without pay, the passing mover, the drover, or the explorer who was looking for a neighborhood which would suit both his fancy and his needs. Escaping from himself, when possible, he sought congenial neighbors far and near. He worked with them if he could, and when this was difficult or impossible he worked for them. He worshipped with them, often less from a sentiment of devotion than from an inextinguishable desire to escape from himself and get anywhere with his fellow beings. The forests of the wilderness were levelled and de-

## Pioneer Foundations

stroyed, the almost impossible cultivation of the land carried on, the prairies broken, one cabin set as close to another as land boundaries would permit, the little school-house built and filled with pupils and teacher, the prejudices of sect overcome, all with the idea, often unconscious, that every movement brought him closer to God's creatures. When he had taken these steps he must use every social power, simple though it might be, and embrace every opportunity, conventional or independent, to maintain his own place. If a new preacher, or doctor, or lawyer came into the neighborhood, he was a subject for interest and study.

This was the outcome of that American instinct long rooted in our life of wanting to know, something applicable in far greater degree to persons than to abstract questions. For the most part this almost abnormal curiosity in its workings was devoid of harm either in purpose or working. It was not a mere prying instinct, but indicated that sparsely distributed over wide areas a people who had not yet received any of the artificial touches incident to their conquest of nature were, after all, wholesome individuals eager for association with their kind. It accounts in our life for many developments otherwise mysterious. Out of it grew the tendency to go to the canal to see a clumsy-looking barge pass through a lock, or to a station to watch an incoming train. It must have credit for the daily gathering somewhere of the village residents—perhaps as distinctive a feature as any known to our early life; for the attractive power of the country tavern and the general

## American Curiosity Found Everywhere

store; for the development of secret societies and mysterious orders; for women's clubs, and for the so-called institutional church—in short, for so many features impossible of understanding until measure has been taken of the far-reaching influence upon our social life of this curiosity and its accompanying inquisitiveness.

It is the unconscious effort of a democratic society to find a basis upon which it can stand while it accepts and rejects, arranges and rearranges, and finds, painfully and not even surely, a reason for its own existence. This quality in the Pioneer has promoted and developed that school of analysis which finds illustration in the novel; in the search by the newspaper for something new so long as it is personal or intimate; and in the pulpit where the gospel preached is less that of Christ than of the interests and changes of the great mass, the common run of men. It runs often almost invisibly like a thread of gossamer through the warp and woof of our history and there is no such thing as an understanding of America without realizing how deeply seated it has been in every step of our growth. The earliest offshoots from Jamestown, Manhattan, and Plymouth had this quality, and it discloses itself in every new settlement, springing from these models without change in its forms or manifestations until the last of the great steps was taken.

It was this quality that promoted the growth of the localism so well illustrated by the narrow town lot—next to the modern flat, the most ridiculous of all the incidents to home-making. Everything in each neighborhood was

## Pioneer Foundations

entitled to be known. The man felt that his own neighbors must be interesting. Great social functions afar off, attended by persons that he had never heard of and for whom he cared nothing, did not attract him. The balls, the dinners, human, monkey, donkey, or horse, of remote millionaires in New York; the official functions in Washington, nearly always it must be confessed, quiet and rational; the ceremonials incident to the visit of the Marquis de Lafayette in 1825 or the Prince of Wales in 1860; and the thousand and one features which were the vanity of an artificial society — thinking itself exclusive when it might be only preposterous — none of these things had for the Pioneer a serious existence. His desire was to see and know his own; the people whose motives and movements he could understand, whose voices he could hear, whose triumphs he could share, with whose honest failures he could sympathize, whose pretensions he could puncture. For him the near or the present was real; the historic or distant was unreal and often impossible.

Satisfaction of this curiosity, so far as it had its origin in loneliness or *ennui*, was generally directed to sensible or sane objects that would relieve these states of mind. Now and then the fantastic or the *outré* characters that hang upon the fringe of life everywhere supplied a certain element of the dramatic or at least of the comic; an eccentric clergyman, often an unfrocked one, a politician offensive to the best, would collect a following, or would at least command an interest that was unwholesome. A self-seeking character in a political or a religious convention,

## Resentment of Familiarity

a lawyer or a fellow farmer with an affected pose of unconventionality, would have a vogue for a time; but, in general, it was narrow and short-lived. It was harmful because weak and weakening, but its principal hurt lay in the fact that it prefigured the sentimentalism that has promoted, mainly among women of morbid minds, the running after the convicted murderer, the notorious female, or the cheap actor, thus leading to the abuse of curiosity rather than to its sane use.

### RESENTMENT OF FAMILIARITY

THERE were many persons who never adjusted themselves to the familiarities, sometimes the incident of their surroundings, not from haughtiness or an assumption of superiority but because their view of life and its seriousness could not adjust itself to such methods. They simply could not bring themselves to accept the good fellow idea and the slap dash habits which were thought to be its necessary accompaniments. Curiously enough, it was generally these men who were entrusted with the most important work done down in every community. It was one of the ways of showing that the necessity to work at the hardest of employments and the willingness to think and do for the general good are not inconsistent with each other. It was this quality of aloofness that, in the Pioneer life as in all our history, has enabled the men entrusted with public work to maintain the dignity of place and responsibility and thus to deserve and command the respect that must accompany authority, however small it may be.



## Pioneer Foundations

This loftiness of mien was the universal accompaniment of the Pioneer. Along the line of the American march the outstanding character of the whole mass was kept on the high plane becoming the yeoman. He never failed to realize that upon him lay the necessity to do nothing low or mean upon the memorable scene through which he was passing. He accepted nothing that he had not earned, and thus, in the midst of what has often been thought a dull monotony of commonplace, he preserved not only the traditions of his race but the habits of his kind as they had accumulated through the ages. All this was done as naturally as if he had lived in a stratified society upon which outward rank had put its exclusive seal. The idea that the Pioneer life was imbedded in a stratum of unrelieved coarseness and rowdyism, out of which men came by some of the hocus-pocus due to chance or accident, has too long held its place in the public mind and in that literature which professes to reflect it.

Nevertheless, the one sad feature incident to ability or dignity in this narrow life was the absence of sympathy by a small number of congenial persons and the consequent lack of power to use the gifts that nature and inheritance had bestowed. A man of the type herein described would often find himself practically alone in his immediate community, forced to await the advent of his fitting associate or to seek and find him in some other neighborhood. This sparseness of numbers added new difficulties to that process of individual self-education which is the most necessary in such a life, if there is to be anything outside the mere

## Resentment of Familiarity

commonplace — the chatter incident to sparrows, to a sewing circle, or to a log-rolling.

Somehow, in spite of lack of books or in spite of society, in the absence of adequate sermons, in the midst of politics or law, the men of the type under discussion were able to preserve something of the higher mental qualities. They did this as naturally and perhaps equally unknowingly in intellectual matters as they did in maintaining and promoting the advances in their chosen work of the improvement of agriculture. It was less formal but not the less effective.

It is the cant of the day to insist that society must be democratic; but the truth is that in America life in its every manifestation is of necessity republican. Ours is a representative system, requiring the utmost vigilance and a broad intelligence in the leaders, most of whom are never, in reality, formally designated or chosen for the work they have to do. Whatever the state of our society or any other, whether old or new, the people in it are surrounded by traditions which they cannot escape. In new settlements these must, it is true, have time to organize and arrange themselves, and until this is done worthy men of talent and character must suffer or find themselves in a condition of atrophy or impotence; but the long experience of three hundred years proves that in the end they assert themselves with a force varying according to need and to their surroundings, so that their development is a test of the success of the separate communities that together make up the country.

## Pioneer Foundations

### MYSTICISM AND LACK OF MOVEMENTS

THE MYSTICISM of the Pioneer — that recognition, perhaps unconscious, of the existence of something which men cannot understand — was universal. It lay not only in his religion, with its peculiar and often hysterical manifestations, but was inherent in every branch of his varied heredity. It was not an instructed quality — indeed, it would not be mysticism if its origin, its metes and bounds were known or recognized — but, like its kind it stood as a strong force in his life. It took the place of the process called education and became one of the most important elements in his culture — that quality which enters into the life of men without having in it the tangible things that may be weighed or measured. It was inevitable that men who were thrown back on nature in her varied moods should in some way recognize the mystery that lay about them. Though far from being recluse in idea or surroundings they were solitary to a degree seldom found among men and it was inevitable that they should look, within their limitations, for those things difficult of understanding.

In this life there was little to produce the movements around both ideas and policies that have come into such dominance under modern surroundings. The two essentials, aside from economic conditions, were freedom of religious opinion and devotion to republican government — attachment to both of these being practically universal. The methods of commanding them were well settled and human ingenuity did not have to look overmuch for new ways of enforcing them either by precept or example.

## Mysticism and Lack of Movements

The Union was deemed as much a settled question as the firmament over their heads. The communistic movements, which started to foredoomed failure in almost every State, did not make much impression upon the average mind. The belief in private property and the determination to defend and maintain it were never questioned. The sentiment about slavery was that of the founders : sorrow for its existence and a strong underlying conviction that, in some way unknown, it would finally be disposed of peacefully. Suffrage was universal on the only lines then considered. Prohibition and the movements that might threaten the liberty of the citizen were left to the quiet operation of moral forces and not to legal enactments. Except to the neighbor, charity did not come into account so that it was not deemed necessary so to organize it that an elaborate machinery must be constructed and that everybody should pass through it.

There was thus little scope for the modern mania for organizations. Individuals could indulge their peculiarities and there was no one to question either their right or their method of asserting it. In a community which thus ran on without interruption, liberty was something more than a name or claim : it was a reality enjoyed by every individual on the broadest lines so long as there was no interference with the rights or privileges of others. As a natural result, there were few issues to interfere with neighborhood peace and comfort. The constant pullings of the sixes against the sevens were less likely to be present in force. There was little concern and less worry than

## Pioneer Foundations

now about the condition or the woes of remote peoples and less temptation to interfere with the opinions or the acts of others than was evinced even thus early in more sophisticated communities.

Among industrious and leading men there was a gift for saving time—a fact which largely accounts for both the amount and variety of work of which they were capable. They were not only willing to put themselves through this unending exertion, but they had to stand as examples to hired men and to their own boys as their young lives came into the responsibilities, so early imposed upon them. Thus, for the best farmers themselves there was a variety of labor—always the wonder of the onlooker or of those who, in later years, recalled in memory what they saw or passed through. These men were not only farmers—they were carpenters, sawyers, bricklayers, plasterers, well-diggers, quarriers—practically everything that would save time or money. Much of the mechanical ingenuity incident to the time may be traced to this necessity for learning so many lines of work collateral to their regular trade—itsself the most difficult and exacting in the matter of study and the resulting knowledge.

In dealing with braggarts of a peculiarly offensive or despicable character it was still common, after whipping them either collectively or by individuals, to rub their faces with dog-fennel—the most foul-smelling of the noxious weeds that generally grew everywhere vicariously from the soil as if provided for this its only known real use. It was generally done in the presence of a jeering

## The Female Scold

crowd although, as there was no rule, the solitary antagonist was often thus treated only to see his assailant ride away in triumph. It was almost as common as lying, as the saying goes, but perhaps the most notable example recorded historically was of Lincoln.\* There were many coarse methods of personal humiliation, but this was the ultimate of all processes because no man once subjected to it could remain in a neighborhood and hold up his head.

### THE FEMALE SCOLD

WHILE it is my endeavor to stick as closely as possible to those social conditions that illustrated the life of the time, yet it is necessary to touch upon some features which, though existing then, have never died and indeed are ever-present illustrations: examples of a deathless immortality. The common scold pursues her noisy but devious way down all the avenues, the roads, and the footpaths of history. While Lot's wife and Xantippe the consort of Socrates were not contemporaries and still longer periods separated them from Milton's daughters and Wesley's wife, they but typify only the best known examples, perhaps by no means the worst, in the ranks of this ever-present figure. As they had associates and imitators in their own day, so every age has had representatives of this eternal type less changeable in all its shifting varieties than the structure of the earth itself.

There was probably in Pioneer time a more general de-

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\* Nicolay and Hay's *Abraham Lincoln: A History*, Vol. I, p. 85.

## Pioneer Foundations

velopment of this shrewishness than in either earlier or later days. Outside those limitations of nature which prescribe that the vixen or the virago is born not made, the curious conditions that surrounded marriage by which many men were forced out of their own class in order to find wives at all, the hard physical labor, the awful isolation, the necessity for the close association that often brought to the marital relation that contempt which familiarity is said to breed, the absence of female help and thus the lack of authority over some one below (which is as the breath of life to the scold), the patience imposed upon the long-suffering husband and children combined to generate the wild rage, the shamelessness incident to its exhibition, that flood of denunciation which so distinguishes this one of the most peculiar of all the products of humanity. The ducking stool, having been abandoned, along with the whipping post and other accepted instruments of discipline, the community had no relief except when the exercise of this gift wore out its subject, as happily it sometimes did. In any Pioneer community, marriage is almost as inevitably the fate of a man as birth or death; otherwise this kind of a woman would have been its most efficient discourager. The curious feature in this life, as in that which went before or came after, was that this gift, like witchcraft, never showed itself in maidenly or courtship days, but, like an avenging Nemesis, was left as a trap for some unwary man.

Oddly, too, the husband-victim was generally one of the patient and most public spirited of the men in the com-

## The Male Grumbler

munity. There was no divorce to save him even if he had had the will or the courage to invoke it, so that he was left to a martyrdom that had not even the prospect before it of relief by his own death. So far as this awful disease was provoked by hard surroundings, it was fairly short-lived; but prosperity or adversity was all the same to the scold. In many cases, when the scandal of such exhibitions became too flagrant in one neighborhood the husband would pull up stakes, throw himself into the mover class, and go farther — perhaps to fare even worse.

Even wife-beating was forbidden as a relief because this was permissible only in the lowest quarters. When resorted to whatever the provocation, the neighborhood soon took such cognizance that no excuse would be accepted. The sharp edges of a rail to the township boundary with the privilege and necessity of carrying himself on might alternate with a quickly improvised but somewhat unfashionable coat of tar and feathers. As a result, many a rural Catherine who never found her Petruchio went through life untamed, a nuisance to herself and all concerned. The peace of a family was never settled, and many a community was scandalized without cause or remedy.

### THE MALE GRUMBLER

THE UNIVERSAL rule that a sinister development in one sex always has its foil in the other was illustrated in this case by the man who was eternally the nagger, the incurable grumbler whose function it was to make himself an unbearable nuisance to his family. He might pose for a



## Pioneer Foundations

saint in the prayer meeting or as a leader in the Sunday school, be as polite and considerate as Pecksniff to the rest of the world, while at home he was the born tyrant, ceaselessly busy in his chosen part. No meal could be prompt enough; no son, perhaps overworked for his benefit, could pursue an allotted task with sufficient industry; no daughter could have a friend in her own sex or marry any man however acceptable or creditable to her; no wife could adjust herself to his whims; no horse or dog, if his own, could so act as to please him, or avert his kicks; nothing could gain from him a commendation or a pleasing word.

While he belonged to the ages and therefore was not a product peculiar to his time or place he always ran true to form. He could do more in a given few moments to make life a burden to all about him than a good and thoughtful person could have overcome with days of effort. It was another instance of the curiosities of life that his wife generally belonged to the meek of her sex, as humble as Uriah Heep, as weak as Dora Copperfield or Amelia Sedley. These contretemps in character often led the outside observer to bewail that spoiling of two houses which was the Pioneer's way of emphasizing the pity of it that the common scold and the grumbler could not have been yoked together.

The presence of pure unrelieved meanness (that manifestation of human nature which goes so far to prove the doctrine of total depravity) was found here in even larger measure, perhaps, among these people, separated though they were from the world, than if they had been policed

## Absence of the Theatrical

by the influences apparent in a more settled society. Perhaps exposure to struggle and hardship may have promoted its development. It came out in all the ways open to mankind. The maiming of animals might have been imitated from ancient Babylon or imported from a modern anti-landlord movement in Ireland, because it is in reality among the oldest forms of revenge — one where cowardice cuts the largest figure. The throwing down of fences, or the opening of gates so that the growing crops of a hated neighbor might be destroyed; the shooting of dogs, not to rid the community of a nuisance but to injure an enemy otherwise beyond their power; the befouling of wells; the breaking of a mill dam; the slashing of clothes when hung on a line; these are only samples of a hundred acts practiced by that ineradicable lowness to which humanity is prone. As it exists everywhere, the necessity does not arise for apology or analysis because it was found even among people exposed in common to the hardships incident to the conquest of a wilderness where all were engaged in a struggle with the primitive.

### ABSENCE OF THE THEATRICAL

NOWHERE within the Pioneer area during the period under review did the drama, whether in an acted or sung form, enter seriously into account. It was not until long after the Civil War that perhaps even one in a hundred of the population of mature age ever saw a play acted by either professionals or amateurs — and those would be limited to the larger places in the earlier zones of settlement, or

## Pioneer Foundations

to the opportunity afforded by a chance visit to older parts of the country.

Curiously enough, religious prejudice did not extend with the same force to the circus. In some families, the children would be kept away from it; but the presence of the menagerie gave some reason for the jest, even then time-honored, about the elders going to the circus in order to protect the children from the animals. As the country came to have enough population to warrant the journey, the circus always followed. It then paid no attention to the railroad (mainly because it did not exist) but started out independently and made its way by wagon into county towns of from one to three thousand population if they were the centers of considerable settlements. Sometimes its stations would be from forty to sixty miles apart so that the journey from one to another was hard and toilsome. How these trips could be made to pay was one of the wonders of the time; but still the show came, drew its patrons from long distances, was the rage among children, and seemingly thrived.

It was of the old-time one-ring variety, with the time-honored clowns and ringmasters, whose ancient jokes excited the same old responses; with its bareback riders; its ground and lofty tumblers; its three or four elephants, its pair of lions, its tiger, its zebra, its rhinoceros, sometimes a hippopotamus, its monkeys, its trained dogs, with a select collection of birds, reptiles, and other specimens of animal life. In its sideshows it had the inevitable giants, dwarfs, knife and sword swallowers, and a miscellaneous

## Absence of the Theatrical

collection of human freaks too tedious to recall. It had the help of everybody, and nobody's ill will. It paid no license, the use of vacant lots was permitted without payment other than a few tickets of admission, the nearest local newspaper gave it unlimited space in return for a small advertisement and tickets; in short, it was the pet of the community and especially of the younger people who, losing time from sleep but not from work, would spend an enchanted evening under its tent and drive home from ten to twenty miles in time for breakfast. To paraphrase Daniel Webster in his great argument in the Dartmouth College case, the Pioneer circus was small but there were those who loved it and carried memories of it to the end of their lives as something that had taken them, if only for a brief moment, out of themselves.\*

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\* An incident occurred at Carlisle, in the heart of the Three River country, that illustrated the showman methods of that day—perhaps of all others. In about 1863 the village blacksmith was a man by the name of Richard M. Duprey who had a family of seven children most of them with the white hair and pink eyes that belong to the albino. The only boy, Edgar Luther by name, was almost a perfect specimen of this human peculiarity. His hair, perfectly white and as fine as floss, acquired greater effect because worn long, and his eyes were so defective that he could see nothing beyond the end of his nose. As optical aids for young persons were unknown, within his area, Edgar learned to read only with great difficulty and, even then, no doubt from the suffering incident to the struggle to study, could hardly keep awake. By the time in question, the first baker's shop seen in the adjacent capital made its appearance and Edgar, tired of failure at school and of his incapacity to learn the trade of his father or any other, became the driver of a bread-wagon. When the circus came Edgar went and soon attracted the attention of the proprietor—I think it was Adam Forepaugh—who, accosting him, asked how he would like to go as a driver or in some other capacity. It was the usual story, in

## Pioneer Foundations

### *THE DECLINE OF THE DANCE*

THE DANCE was only permissible among a class of people remote from anything that even faintly resembled builders of States. They were restricted to those people who were not in agreeable relation to the community, and useless to themselves or the world. The small houses and cabins which lay generally on the outskirts of a respectable neighborhood (they were seldom permitted in the village) occupied by persons not recognized as contributors to its progress, held dances, oftentimes on puncheon or earth floors, attended in the main by their own kind, though occasionally resorted to in a furtive way by a few young men just above them, often well-meaning persons but devoid of sufficient firmness of character to keep them with their own who often passed for hard and harassing. It need scarcely be explained that no woman of any but this lower order would be found in such places; but men, everywhere, are prone to treat themselves as chartered libertines, whether they are or not.

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this respect, about country boys, but the sequel proves that the motive and use were to be different. Edgar disappeared, and neither Carlisle, nor Des Moines, nor his family were destined to know him more. When the show reached a point sufficiently distant that exposure would be impossible, a new attraction was added to the side show announced in flaming placards: "Walk in and see the Native Wild White African; it took eleven years to tame him!" This new freak was none other than my old playmate, Edgar, whom I have never since seen. Probably forty years after, one of my brothers, visiting a circus in Omaha, seeing a picture at one of the side show entrances, went in, found it was the long-lost Edgar, who talked to him freely about his experiences, and enumerated some of the various parts he had played since he had run away.

## The Decline of the Dance

If the revels tended to produce a nuisance, cognizance would be taken of it, and after warning the offenders would be forced to move on, along with their accommodations for drink and other disreputable facilities. The best among such offenders would be drawn, if possible, into the current of the next revival meeting and would often be so caught in its meshes as to break up their practices for the time. The fiddlers (and somehow even almost the most exacting among the Pioneers, perhaps because of the penalties involved, had a sneaking regard for a fiddle) were of the rudest sort and the dances, even when after 1865 they gradually became permissible and thus respectable, were of the rural or barn variety. They were outlawed and, as is the case with like institutions, were accompanied by much noise and a large measure of coarseness. They were no longer even interesting as studies in the forbidden.

But, in general, the dance was looked upon by the Pioneers as the vestibule to hell. In the ten years after 1854, with a fairly comprehensive association in many Pioneer districts and knowledge of many more, I never heard of a dance in the homes of really influential farm, village, or small town families; so that as there were no halls or other places of assembly, except the schoolhouse, dancing was about as completely suppressed as in the most bigoted of New England communities when Puritanism was at its height. In other rational parts of the world, from the earliest known days, the dance has been the inevitable and natural accompaniment of social occasions; but the shucking bee, the quilting party, the candy pull,

## Pioneer Foundations

the nut cracking, along with the house or barn-raising or the log-rolling, came and went without the moving of feet to music (indeed, music itself was practically unknown, outside the primitive church variety) this prejudice probably being based more on its relation to dancing than from any lack of power to produce it, or to a natural disinclination to hear it. There were none of the traditional objections (often attributed, indifferently, to Luther and Wesley) to the devil having the best times.

The playing of cards was looked upon with no less of disfavor. Their use was supposed to be the equivalent of gambling. Boys and hired men often indulged in the simpler card games of the time, but they had to hide themselves away in the hay mow or a remote grove, or in the watermelon patch, planted in the middle of a cornfield to protect its fruit from marauding boys—the latter being among permitted infractions of the eighth commandment. Chess and backgammon were seldom played; but checkers, being a game easy to learn and quick to play, was practiced now and then. Even the most harmless devices intended for the killing of time were discouraged (this being a process that was sinful in a high degree), time being meant for work, for Bible reading, or for reflection upon the solemnity of life and the certainty of death.

### LITTLE TO INTEREST WOMEN

PROBABLY no known historic period contained so little to amuse or interest the woman as that included in the Pioneer era. Whether as child, maiden, wife, or mother, she

## Little to Interest Women

literally represented the three K's of the late German Emperor, *Kinder, Kirchen, und Kuchen*, children, church, and kitchen. The ordinary pleasures or amusements, current at nearly all previous times, were either impossible or forbidden. Her mission was to work, to watch, and to pray; and she did these with all her heart and energy until tired nature could carry her no further. It is no cause for wonder that so much of that early life became for woman little more than an altar of sacrifice.

The question is often asked how our great-grandmothers not only lived through these times at all but how they were able to do their part, to maintain their own character, to bring up their families, and to be God-loving and God-serving; and yet they did these things with such acceptance that there should be established in every county, over the vast area covered by their achievements, some recognized memorial to commemorate the conspicuous service done to this country in its time of need by the Pioneer woman. She was not a lawmaker, a preacher, a doctor, the actual builder of houses, or the destroyer of forests : but she made all these acts possible as well as real.





*SANITARY CONDITIONS — LANGUAGE*



*SACRIFICE OF LIFE*

FROM its earliest days this Pioneer life was a veritable ogre in eating up both men and women (more especially the latter) with disease, much of it now classed as preventible — from which came suffering, peril, and premature death. The infection of the soil, the extremes of heat and cold, the hard, grinding work — exacting physical toil without relief; the awful isolation; the remoteness from medical aid, whether of doctors, medicine, or nurses, or in the knowledge that gives all of them the highest usefulness; the enforced faith placed in quacks and simples responsible in their time for untold loss of life — all these were inescapable elements, which though largely overlooked cannot be forgotten in any attempt to estimate either the sacrifices or the final achievements of the Americans, who in their collective capacity after many generations of struggle finally conquered for their nation and their race so large and so fair a part of the earth's surface.

If ever such a thing as courage could demonstrate itself unitedly in a people where in a period called peaceful one contingent after another plunged into miasmatic swamps and forests, skirting the banks of rivers where fever was the only welcoming host, then a monument of some kind, built in every township on the line of march, is the due of such sacrifices. Nor can the fact be forgotten that the vast majority of these adventurous men and women made

## Pioneer Foundations

this new life plunge out of surroundings which, though remote from the luxurious, had reached a degree of comfort in food, clothing, and shelter almost if not quite as complete as that then developed in older communities. So great was the prodigality of nature, so conspicuous the reward of industry and produce to the new American from the earliest days, that a quarter of a century in any given settlement, from the coast to the great central rivers, brought material returns that are one of the economic wonders of the world's history.

In the early days of settlement it was impossible to remove, or even fairly to know, the causes of disease. The river bottoms could not be rid of their poisonous effluvia, nor would the outlying bayous, swamps, and sloughs so drain themselves that their dangers could be eliminated or modified. Even on the high prairies, the deep soil, fertile though it was (and all the more because of its natural richness) could only be deprived of its dangers by time and cultivation.

Each succeeding zone opened to settlement had its own maladies, new in form though really variations of known diseases. To the south of the lower Delaware River lay that long, low coastline with fevers either new or imported, their distribution and the resulting mortality intensified by the variable climatic conditions; back in the hinterland, the foothills, covered with a dense almost impenetrable forest, developed their own maladies; the mountains, strong in air and soil, had their physical drawbacks whether in person or by heredity to these restless migratory movers

## The Constant Wastage of People

who had to make them stopping places; then came the plunge into the flat, hopeless wilderness, with its forest jungles, its low river bottoms; followed by the prairie, with its bleak winds, now like an Arctic hurricane, again resembling an East Indian sirocco. There were men who, with their families, passed through these zones of danger one after another.

In some there were new or added perils from biting serpents or stinging insects, and, over all, was the disease-carrying mosquito with its torture and its poison, never absent in summer by day or night. Go where he might, this man working for the necessities of life could find no escape from the noisome, infected soil doomed long to retain its worst humors. When to these were added the peril from accident by the use of new or unfamiliar tool and machinery, as well as those which resulted from the violences of nature—taking all these into account, the lot of the settler, judged from the physical side alone, was less happy than that of his predecessors on the relatively fixed scenes from which he had started anew on his slow, perilous journey towards the setting sun.

### THE CONSTANT WASTAGE OF PEOPLE

THE OUTCOME of these varied conditions in the West was a wastage of human life, greater many times over than that from Indians at any time in the history of settlement. It went on among every class of the population, the most efficient having little more immunity than the most useless; but, in the main, this destruction was of the bone and

## Pioneer Foundations

sinew, as well as the brains and character of the land, men and women capable of thought, work, devotion, and sacrifice. All along the line of march of the Pioneer lie the remains of as brave an army as any that ever breasted bullets in war, far more thoroughly forgotten than those who falling in battle have generally been rewarded with that pathetic epitaph, "unknown".

The statement that this mortality went on, at about the same rate among all classes of people is, like most generalizations, subject to exceptions. It was only natural that those nearest the top in heredity, origin, intelligence, the more fairly equipped and prosperous, should be better able by training and character as well as resources to meet the prevailing untoward conditions than those down below. They had at least some sanitary knowledge, were better clothed, fed, and housed, knew in some measure how to forecast or anticipate storms and to avert their more serious effects. They were thus somewhat better able to avoid or temper the worst visitations. They could command the best medical skill (never too good) that the community afforded. They knew how to care for their animals and thus to minimize losses. Those below, in their various grades, were ill-clad, badly housed, and insufficiently nurtured. They had little foresight, and as a consequence were wont to be feeble, anemic, careless, little fitted physically to resist the diseases incident to their surroundings, often unable in days of stress to get any competent medical aid, and thus had few resources with which to oppose the aggressions of disease or accident. Here, again, to him

## When Sickness or Accident Came

that had still more was given. It was not in any case so much a matter of ready money (very few persons in even the best position had this) as it was of those intangible things personified in discipline, credit, known and assured industry — in a word, character. This overcame many perils, whether physical or moral.

### WHEN SICKNESS OR ACCIDENT CAME

BUT to whomever or of whatever type sickness came, it was met with a grimness and a patience in keeping with the character of the Pioneer and the times in which he lived. It might be cured, but not averted, scarcely hindered or relieved. It was deemed a visitation of Providence, a just punishment for personal or inherited or inherent moral delinquencies and, as such, it lay beyond human foresight or responsibility. If it could be cured, well and good; if death came, this, too, was as distinctly an act of God as if it had resulted from a falling tree or a stroke of lightning. Both called for consolation, not necessarily with benefit of clergy; but for the reading of the Bible to the sufferer in illness, and to the family in death, by one of its number, or by some trusted neighbor, in the other. The preacher was neither spurned nor necessary; but the spell that he had long cast otherwheres over the world, to which he so long ministered, had been broken. Generally speaking, being peripatetic in residence, he was not always available for these emergencies and so he naturally lost his power. Besides, so many of the laity were active in religious life, and the vogue incident to the priestly laying



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on of hands had so long been lost, that resort to it was no longer thought requisite or even helpful.

Much skill was developed among a great variety of persons in dealing with accidents. It was not dignified as first aid (the name now given) though this was its real function. These casualties were many, from axes, saws, ploughs, scythes, reapers, mowers, saw and grist mills, blacksmith shops, cider presses, blowers, threshing machines, prostrations by the sun or in the water, falling trees, the attacks of animals, runaways of horses and, sometimes, strange to say of oxen — in brief all the things that can happen to men engaged in the roughest work. Many arose from the carelessness incident to custom or from the ignorance due to over-confidence in skill or strength; no small proportion came from entrusting young or inexperienced boys with duties beyond their years. But they had to be dealt with, and the best men in the neighborhood either inherited or developed this gift, so that the duty was performed, however roughly, until, if it was sufficiently serious, a doctor could be summoned. Often a woman of the family, generally a grandmother, would know what to do and would not stand upon the order of doing it. In minor cases, sometimes with even so serious an accident as a broken arm or leg, the victim, taking matters into his own hands, would mount his horse and despite suffering or risk ride off to seek for himself the most convenient doctor.

It was before the days of anesthetics so that there was nothing to do but grin and bear it, which was generally

## When Sickness or Accident Came

done with a large degree of philosophy though with no assumption on the part of the victim that after all he rather liked it. Many of the smaller treatments, such as the puncturing of boils or carbuncles, now dignified by the name of operations, and sometimes exploited in local newspapers, were quite in the ordinary day's work with both patient and doctor and in many cases without the intervention of the latter at all. There was much delicacy and skill in dealing with these features in bodily affliction, not upon the lines of the old-time simples but with a knowledge that gave confidence to all concerned. Such a personage as a trained nurse was unknown, but in this function also there was little neglect or carelessness in dealing with the afflicted. Generally speaking, it was conducted inside the family, various members taking turns. In cases deemed serious, the patient was looked after night and day. As always happens this devotion of husband or wife to wife or husband, or of parents to children, or the opposite, was naturally a distinctive aid to the forging of new links of affection. Often when the illness was a lingering one, a succession of neighbors, generally the men among them, would take turns in watching until convalescence or the end came.\*

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\* I recall many such cases in my own family and others in our neighborhood in which their various members rendered this service to persons in dire poverty with whom death was only a question of days, sometimes of hours. These attentions were not bestowed because of close knowledge, for generally speaking its beneficiaries were persons of the humblest order, often among the poor white caste. Nor was this attention given from membership in the same church, lodge, or other organization. It was the outcome of good-

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This neighborliness, this help in time of need, was in evidence, throughout the entire Pioneer period when the prospective mother could always count upon the aid by personal attendance of one or more matrons and an assurance that nothing would be neglected, neither herself, nor her other children, her husband, or any interest of her household. While the old-fashioned midwife, little known anywhere in our history as an outstanding figure, had disappeared, the mother, however poor she might be or whatever her social rank, could fairly look forward to the four weeks necessary to recover and thus avoid the sapping of strength or permanent injury by a premature resumption of household duties. Now and then some brutal husband would insist upon his wife's return to work; but the Pioneer women knew how to deal with him; and if their admonitions were not effective, their husbands had ways of doing what they deemed a duty. Whatever the hardships of the Pioneer woman might be, the age of chivalry in its palmy days never brought more universal practical devotion to high ideals than was shown in these rude far-flung communities.

### *INFREQUENCY OF INSANITY AND SUICIDE*

It is one of the wonders of the time that there was so little insanity. The conditions that seemed so favorable

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will, an evidence of the human charity of the time which sought to do in his day of need, a worthy act for a suffering human being. Such attention did not stop with death and burial, the latter often at some expense, but involved help to the family when deprived of support.

## Infrequency of Insanity and Suicide

to its development apparently provided automatically an antidote.\* The activities of the life, the necessary employment of the mind upon something both practical and urgent, the absence of the artificial, the outdoor life and the constant intimate association, united to a strong religious purpose, must have exercised, on the whole, a soothing effect. It was fortunate that this was so, as few facilities were provided for dealing with mental affliction. Asylums developed so slowly that most of the mentally afflicted, including the occasional idiot, found their way into county poorhouses (almost the most miserable and inhumane of institutions) or were given outdoor aid through weekly allowances paid to their families or sometimes, when friendless, to outsiders.

While the known insane were almost negligible there was a considerable contingent of persons who in these days would receive and rightly public care in asylums or sanitoriums. The merely queer, the oddities found everywhere, the cranky or peculiar now watched with official or officious eye, were cared for in their own homes with the loving attention characteristic of the time and with the further reservation that as only God was responsible for peculiarities or weaknesses, so religious duty and natural affection were conjoined. Many persons, the majority of them wo-

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\* Mental derangement is nearly unknown in these new countries. There is no instance of insanity at present in this state [Indiana] which probably now contains 100,000 inhabitants. A middle aged man, of liberal attainments and observation, who has lived much of his life in Kentucky, remarked, as an incident of extraordinary occurrence, that he once knew a lady afflicted with this malady. — Morris Birkbeck's *Notes on a Journey in America* (1818), p. 128.

## Pioneer Foundations

men, suffered mentally from the abnormal excitement incident to revivals; but generally speaking, time and the wonderful family patience of the day, along with the removal of an obvious cause, worked a cure as effective as the mind and body of the sufferer permitted. Physicians knew next to nothing about mental disease, so that the community was fortunate in its comparative absence.

In like manner suicide was almost unknown. In settlements, up to the time that counties attained a population of ten thousand, an instance was seldom heard of. Naturally owing to the still surviving Christian horror and the cruelty incident to the denial of religious burial, there were probably occasional cases, never revealed even in the openness of the times, but these would scarcely interfere with the conclusion thus recorded. Nature, in its great capacious outdoors, furnished relief from hard work, loneliness, misunderstanding, even from cruelty; while religious conviction brought to those upon whom this world was over hard assurance of reward in the next. Beyond this, hope was in the air for those who could feel how the human experiments that had been tried and come to failure elsewhere in history were sure of success here; while the miserable who might be said to be almost in the very depth of their woes had nothing to gain from self-destruction and might, in their own fears, stand to lose.

### *SUFFERING FROM SPECIAL MALADIES*

THERE was much suffering from eye diseases all along the line of the Pioneer's tedious march. Ineffective artificial

## Suffering from Special Maladies

lighting, serious as it was, had less to do with it (owing to the prevalent practice of the precept "early to bed and early to rise") than did the universal presence of malaria. Conditions began to improve when the prairie was reached or the trees of the wilderness had been destroyed and thus conquered. Much of it was due to the lack of optical relief. However nature had fashioned the eyes or abuse had hurt them, no relief was possible from glasses. These were used only by the old and their presence was so distinctly a herald or revelation of age that even when obviously necessary the time of putting them on was delayed as long as possible; so that, however deficient in the gift of sight, a child (even the most helpless albino) did not get the relief which spectacles would have afforded. Much of the dullness or backwardness of pupils was due to the fact that by no possibility could the unfortunate child see to study or master lessons. But the eye affliction of the time came, for the most part, from what were known generically as sore eyes, inflammation mainly of the upper lid, which producing granulation in many cases became chronic and the doctors of the day naturally could not cope with a disease the cause of which was irremovable. Neither their skill nor their medicine was effective in such a case.

Likewise, there was much suffering from disorders of the nose, the ears, and the feet — all of them, then as now, outside the purview of the ordinary family physician's knowledge or treatment. Specialists were not yet available so that many maladies became chronic, not only in individuals, but almost epidemic in neighborhoods — other

## Pioneer Foundations

visitations of a Providence upon whom responsibility for so many human frailties and misfortunes were unfairly cast. The teeth were almost wholly neglected and, until a comparatively later time within our period, the Pioneer dentist had to all appearance just graduated from a butcher's shop or an iron foundry.

### *DEATHS AND FUNERALS*

IN DEALING with disease it becomes necessary to treat of the last scene of all which ends in death. Even in this there are changes in fashion. In spite of the great respect always shown for the dead, the burial places of a new country, often improvised in a corner of some settler's field, tended to become overgrown with bushes and briars, neglect marking every feature. The attesting headstone (which was usually a headboard) was generally lost or fell while many interments were as if made in a potter's field without thought of memorial. The funeral of the Pioneer day was performed with a respect for the dead and his survivors that was characteristic of Christian society at its best state. There was little show not only from want of inclination but from necessity. The shroud, the oldest and simplest of clothing for the dead, was in almost universal use. It was made by neighbor women, some of whom acquired a certain skill. There was no undertaker, no hearse, no nodding plumes, no chosen pallbearers, nothing that would suggest or permit the intervention or the help of any hands but those of willing, sympathizing neighbors. The coffin was well made by the village

## Deaths and Funerals

carpenter — generally in oak or walnut. As there was no caretaker for the little burying place, the grave was dug by the neighbors whose hands received the coffin which was carried on a farm wagon and escorted by friends of the family. When the ceremonies were over, they filled in the soil and completed the grave in the usual shape.

Sometimes there were commitment ceremonies, but, if so, they were brief, as the funeral sermon almost universal whatever the age of the dead had already been preached at the house. These were, quite generally, the terror of the neighborhood, long, doctrinal, most highly eulogistic, especially if the deceased had lived without an open profession of his faith or had been inclined to disbelief, and then near his last moments had signified his conversion. In such cases, it always seemed to the young onlooker that a place in the highest heaven was awarded to the subject whose upturned face lay exposed in the coffin always open before the preacher. But it was rare that even the evil liver was consigned to the dire punishment which was the inevitable logic of the awful teachings of the day. Occasionally some preacher more ignorant than his fellows, even more set than usual in the Calvinism which he never could understand, would console a weeping mother by expressing a doubt as to the fate in the next world of the infant snatched untimely from her arms.

Old mourning customs, imported and long used by the early colonists, had gone. The New England habit of giving rugs, gloves, and scarves to those attending funerals had disappeared along with those other customs seen in



## Pioneer Foundations

Virginia under which drinks were distributed. It was common for some neighbor, intimates of the family, to return to the stricken household in order to render any services that might suggest themselves and to say prayers not for the dead, which would have been deemed sacrilegious, but for the living left behind.

### *THE PIONEER PHYSICIAN*

THE COUNTRY doctor, for so long a period a figure in the common everyday life of the world, an ornament as a character in literature in nearly all countries, was found everywhere, one on the average in each of the settlements as they filled up made in the six-mile square artificial divisions known as townships. In the earliest days, when movers were sparsely distributed, his radius, the range over which he and his faithful horse could reach patients, was probably twenty miles, that is, ten miles from his center, thus often overlapping his fellow, although in many cases he rode much farther beyond. Wherever some human being was suffering from a malady or a woman sent up a call from a cabin for help in her hour of need, there he went, day or night, in sunshine or through storm, over roads, whether miry, frozen, or barely passable, upon his errand of mercy. In general, if sober and efficient, he held his own without competition until the population within his area became from five hundred to eight hundred. It was seldom that he had a helper, young men generally preferring to start out for themselves after studying for a short period with other physicians in the crude western

## The Pioneer Physician

medical schools of the time. Sometimes, though not at all universally, they had had a brief though rude experience in the work now known as that of an interne.

Judged by modern standards, the preliminary education of the young doctor was meagre and imperfect, often only that of the country school, though generally speaking it was supplemented by a fugitive term or so at the nearest small college or academy. Both these advantages and that incident to his medical education were generally earned by him as a teacher of winter schools during which periods his spare hours were given to the courses of reading or study that lay open to him in the line of his chosen profession. Often he boarded with the village doctor and perhaps took care of his tutor's horses or did other tasks that both filled in his day's work and helped him over the financial stile. In perhaps nine cases out of ten, this ambitious young Esculapius (he would have been known as a sawbones and would have so called himself) was a farm boy, though in many cases his parents would live in the village.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the simplicity of the early medical college. For this great new region dependence was placed upon such institutions, first in Cincinnati, next in Chicago after its marvellous development began in the early forties; but such schools were found in a fugitive, rude way in Louisville or Indianapolis, or St. Louis, while a tendency was later manifest to attach them to the small State Universities or even to the newly formed and growing denominational colleges of the times, although

## Pioneer Foundations

the connection of the one with the other was seldom close.

A local physician, in a center like those mentioned, would so meet the demand for instruction that almost without taking thought he would find himself at the head of a medical school of his own. If he was a man of skill, he would go on with his practice and teach his pupils in such leisure as he could make. In this way he would often gradually gather about him those representatives of his profession to whom theory was more attractive than practice. Many of these men were much more highly instructed than the principal himself and before long such a faculty, however small or unpretending, would develop one or more men with a real gift for teaching and a love for it — men destined to carry their influence into many neighborhoods then either non-existent or just struggling into being.

### LEGAL CONTROL ALMOST ABSENT

THE LAWS regulating medical practice were lax and the minatory power of voluntary associations almost absent. Meagre as was the training, it probably lay far beyond the average attainment by the majority of those who presumed to offer their advice and services to the afflicted. Quackery was everywhere prevalent, and, as no effective legal machinery existed for its detection or punishment, the imposition and the fraud practiced upon a simple and confiding people were great beyond any present day comprehension. Bad as the things were of themselves, they led to hidden crime and to a degree and amount of suffering that may easily be imagined.

## Legal Control Almost Absent

The conditions that then existed promoted these ends. In a new country where disease in some form seemed to be universal, the accepted, necessary fate for every human being, the people promoted in its turn the idea that a dose must be taken for every ailment, however slight. Although they lived right in the midst of nature, it was seldom thought of as having any curative power over the diseases sent by the Creator as a just, inevitable punishment. There was an almost fanatical reliance upon medicine of some sort. No smallest comprehension of the doctrine announced long before by Henry Fielding\* ever seemed to enter the minds of these simple patients, or of their doctors.

Thus, the quack had free scope for any kind of fraud; while the patent medicine vendor, with his lying advertisements of all sorts of pain killers, vermifuges, cough and consumption cures, and other fraudulent, often hurtful, devices, could conduct his trade unhindered by law or sentiment — even encouraged and protected by both. As everybody (old, middle-aged, or young) with even the smallest complaint, either real or imagined, must have medicine, the field was open for these forms of pretension, and for the use of the old-time simples which, whatever their quality, were happily for the most part practically harmless.

Out of these surroundings and amid such conditions the

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\* I have heard some of these, [physicians] with great gravity, deliver it as a maxim, That Nature should be left to do her own work, while the physician stands by as it were to clap her on the back, and encourage her when she doth well. — *The History of Tom Jones*, Book II, Chapter IX.

## Pioneer Foundations

real country doctor, with the origin and nurture already indicated, emerged and had to make his way as best he could. He generally had youth, ambition, courage, and devotion on his side. And he had need for them. To these he added a monumental patience and a knowledge of the people among whom his lot was cast. He was part of the life of his time and thus was not looking for an easy way of going through the world. In spite of the ever-present perils to health he was pretty generally in good physical condition himself. He was, on the average, younger than his neighbors of the same relative social position; while his activities, his enforced outdoor life on horseback, and perhaps a certain abstention from the drugs which he carried and dispensed, all tended to keep him in good trim. It was a necessity that he should be sober, although it was a curious fact that the second doctor who came into neighborhoods often failed from that addiction to drink that had probably driven him on from pillar to post.

### THE DOCTOR'S PLACE IN THE SOCIAL SCHEME

THE DOCTOR had not much time for good fellowship, or for church or other work of a public nature. He was not ambitious or active in politics, although in some cases, though seldom until after the Civil War was over when he could shift his practice for a few weeks, he went to the State legislature. As he compounded his own medicines, consisting in large part of quinine served in the worst tasting of all possible powders, though sometimes artfully, though seldom successfully, concealed in preserves or sugar;

## The Doctor's Place in the Social Scheme

or of calomel laboriously rolled into the form of heavy, awkward looking pills; or of castor oil or Epsom salts with a few other standbys of the time, he had little leisure between outdoor trips to his patients.

He generally took care of his own horses, in whose selection he was skillful and particular to a degree and for which he had a special fondness. He had to go out at any time of the day or night, and without regard to weather; often a ride of ten miles in one direction would be succeeded upon his return, without rest, by another like visit in the opposite direction with no relief other than a shifting of accoutrements, including the inevitable saddlebags, from one horse to another. No doctor could hope for success if, when called, he neglected or refused to attend the humblest, poorest patient. To let such an one suffer or die would have been fatal.

His office hours were uncertain and movable. He was generally well-skilled as a nurse, and in many cases this care was the greatest need of the sufferer whose family had to be instructed in the art, which was often, except for him, absent. He had to make his own diagnosis without the hope, except in almost the fewest instances, of consultation with a colleague, and yet in case of need he had to take on the cases of a distant neighbor within reach. Not many professional jealousies were developed, due no doubt to the absence of competition, each having enough to do to attend to his own. He was an allopath or old school, and the final invasion, scarcely perceptible within our period, of the homeopath or the still rarer hydropath,

## Pioneer Foundations

raised the same signal for war as that hoisted in the older parts of the country.

Doctor's charges, based mainly upon mileage, were nominally regulated by law; but in spite of this fact, there was a good deal of the shifting quality about them. They were set forth with that attention to detail which formerly distinguished both legal and medical statements. Their payment was fitful and uncertain in spite of a recognized high standard of honor about them in the Pioneer community. When money was scarce, as it was during most of the years under review, they were often paid in wood, oats, corn, hay, or other necessities so that the doctor's sheds, granaries, or haymows would often contain these articles drawn from many sources or from varying distances. In many cases the small tenant, or the hired hand, when work was scarce would devote a few hours to the doctor's garden, or if he had a farm, to his fields. In many cases a daughter would help with the family work, a washerwoman would do the laundry, or a boy would convoy the cow to and from pasture or care for the horses. In some way, despite the scarcity of real money, the bill would generally be paid, if the family were settlers. But not all patients were equally conscientious so that with those so poor that they had nothing but their poverty, the movers-on, the mere passers-through, the dishonest, the country doctor who was paid for more than half of the charges placed upon his books, might count himself fortunate. With ample nominal earnings, he seldom got rich, but was generally able to live as well as the best of his patients and

## Study and Removal to the Large Towns

perhaps to anticipate them in the adoption of such improvements as furnace heat, set baths, and the like, and to enlarge the scope of the intellectual activities of his family by the purchase of books, magazines, and a piano.

### *STUDY AND REMOVAL TO THE LARGE TOWNS*

As HE prospered and the varieties of disease shifted themselves somewhat, owing to changes in the face of the country, the doctor felt the necessity of the formal renewal of his studies. By this time still younger men had come upon the scene so that it might be possible to take either an associate or an assistant. The doctor would then betake himself, for a few months, to the school which he had left years before, or to another of better grade in order to attend the lectures of a higher order of teachers, giving special attention to new subjects, or perfecting his knowledge in those with which he was familiar. As he kept fairly in touch with the current literature of his profession, these researches put him so into line with medical progress that the neglectful rival soon fell behind the standard thus constantly improved.

As the larger towns grew into at least the semblance of cities, the law of demand and supply drove or drew the most efficient of these country doctors into the ampler fields thus opened. But, wherever they went, they remained, in the days before specialization had become both the necessity and the fashion, the same devoted friends of their new patients and the families that called upon them for treatment or advice. Out of them all came no great



## Pioneer Foundations

or revolutionary discoveries, but they illustrated, as did their associates in every other line of activity, the triumph in our modern life of the man of industry and average attainments.

Thus, on the whole, the country doctor was one of the creditable, virile figures of an exacting time and did a work whose importance and usefulness cannot be exaggerated. He can only be judged by his day; when this process is honestly applied, he does not suffer in comparison with the men of other callings, whether professional or industrial, or relatively, with the best found now or at any other time in a great calling.

### THE LAWYER IN THE EARLIER DAYS

THERE is not much to be said about the position of the lawyer in a Pioneer community, not because he was either absent or without influence, but for the reason that outside judicial administration there was no large place for him in the original scheme of life. The business of the time was almost wholly that of physical construction out of the raw materials that lay there awaiting adaptation to the purposes of man. As law was built upon custom and supposed to represent common sense, almost every man of average parts knew within the ordinary limitations what he was permitted to do. He had come out of many centuries of order and liberty, and whilst he might be active in asserting rights, the justice of which was generally recognized, they were so related to details that principles were not much involved. These men had sufficient power of

## The Lawyer in the Earlier Days

expression to make vocal their wants, so that there was no need in these respects for the services of a Patrick Henry or a James Otis. In the ordinary concerns of life, there was even less need for the lawyer. Land titles were either settled by the warranty of the government (about the only specific fundamental service that it could do for the Pioneer) or the disputes that arose were so petty that they settled themselves, for the most part, by neglect or attrition.

Thus, while the lawyer went along with settlement his numbers were small and his pickings scanty. He had no large functions to perform. The building of roads, bridges, schoolhouses, and courthouses was done by the same men who opened farms, devised mills, industrial shops, and the paraphernalia of a new community. Even in the transfer of real estate, the lawyer was seldom needed to draw a deed, and other property passed easily from hand to hand without ceremony. Disputes were few, crime proceeded mainly along the lines of assault and battery or petty larceny so that the functions of even the judge and the district attorney seldom rose above the rank of those pertinent to a small magistrate's jurisdiction. It was, therefore, difficult for the Pioneer lawyer seriously to magnify his office — when, in truth, he could not find it.

Besides, there ran through the whole of early American life a certain prejudice against the law as a profession. It was easy for a people with a reasonable degree of acuteness to see through the mock forensic efforts common in cases of positive insignificance. The prejudice against all men

## Pioneer Foundations

who were not doing constructive work (something visible to the outer eye) was strong. In our American growth, history and tradition had denied confidence to the lawyer. It was easy to understand the doctor, the clergyman, or the teacher, to see what each was trying to do; but every other man who did not actually labor with his hands was suspected, more or less, of not playing his part in development.

Nor was the lawyer, in spite of his supposed glibness, always welcomed in the legislature which had so long been the special quarry of his profession. There was little that required legal interpretation. Laws were based upon precedents already settled by two centuries of American experiment and in a series of new communities. The lawyer could not know anything like so well as the leading practical farmer who was also a natural leader, what was needed in roads and schools. He was suspect as soon as the railroad pushed into sight, or the corporation with its wants, or its fee-paying abilities, began to develop as a business force. Then, too, the lawyer could only live in the town which, however small, was somewhat out of favor with a decidedly rural population.

### THE LAWYER HAD THUS TO BE A GLEANER

THUS the lawyer was not a creative factor. He could only follow as a necessity in a fuller life, so that in most cases he belonged to the second contingent of settlers, often coming as a boy and growing up into conditions more or less completely organized. We have seen that the creative

## The Lawyer Had Thus To Be a Gleaner

forces in public life were drawn from the farming element and its collateral or associated trades. A lawyer might be sent out as a Territorial Governor, or even elected to this office upon the admission of a new State; but he was essentially the representative of the farmer, studying and obeying, almost incessantly, the whims of a master. As time passed a goodly proportion of the two houses of the legislature came to be made up of lawyers; but farmers formed the major part and the same principles asserted themselves. At no time in the Pioneer life did the merely glib-tongued man go far and perhaps his tether was shorter in the earlier days than it became after 1865. This did not afford much leeway to the demagogue of whom so many, throughout our national history, have made the legal profession a ladder upon which to climb into popular favor.

The prejudice against the profession as such gradually declined as industrial development made the services of its members a necessity — a fact easily seen and recognized. Some of the really strong figures that finally came to the front were lawyers, pure and simple, but promotion came to them as men of ability and character and in spite of their profession. Samuel F. Miller and John F. Dillon, both Pioneer doctors originally, would have been an honor to any bar to say nothing of that in a new Pioneer community, but it was as lawyers and not as public men, as neither stooped to give "to party what was meant for mankind."

On the whole, however, the practice of the law, after the old-time circuit traveling period was over, was rather a small matter, dealing with petty conditions in the hands

## Pioneer Foundations

of a few efficient men. The early Pioneer tendency to litigiousness between neighbors had mostly passed away, few causes for it remaining. The criminal practice fell into the keeping of a special class, mainly the coarse bullying order familiar to police courts everywhere. It was not until business activity was compressed into the corporation that law practice became lucrative enough to make it attractive. By this time the Civil War was over, the law school had almost superseded individual training in an office or was conjoined with it, the number of practitioners was rapidly increasing, mainly from the outside, the profession took on new life and the more settled conventional character long fixed for it in older communities. It became more of a business, dealing with every-day transactions, rather than a profession devoted to great legal principles so many of which had been settled that precedent or case law ruled the day. Wealth rapidly acquired fell into the keeping of a new generation, either really incompetent to manage it or distrustful of its own ability. Estates, banks, railroads, manufacturing enterprises, all had to be advised, so that, as everywhere in a settled society, the lawyer met a real need and came into his own. This, however, bore little relation to the life of the Pioneer where the lawyer was an incident; it was a development that had to be met by new weapons and methods.

### *SOME FEATURES IN LANGUAGE*

IN THE every-day speech of the majority, known as dialect, hardly a new word was added from the Allegheny to the

## Some Features in Language

Missouri. The phrase that seemed odd or old-fashioned could generally be traced to some remote source. It was, therefore, only a survival, sometimes a revival, of an old form, often classic either in the old country or in the colonies, though now and then what the strict philologist called vulgar. Occasionally such a word or phrase would take on a novel or strange meaning, or acquire emphasis, and thus be resurrected; but it could still be traced to its origin. Its survival would seem a mystery, though in reality it was seldom a serious one. It might have been introduced at some period unknown in a place whose name was lost by groups afterwards scattered to all the points of the compass; but its presence proved that at some time and somewhere a man or family had come from a particular district in the British Isles and had gone forward without leaving any mark other than a word or a series of words overlaid in the struggle for existence in the place of origin.

These words are sometimes said to be racy of the soil; they no doubt were so once upon some spot of earth; but so far as their use by the Pioneer was concerned, the collective raciness was of many soils found along the line of slow march, covering a period of centuries of a people between England and the Missouri River. They seemed picturesque — when no doubt in the place of birth they had slowly gained currency as the accepted small change of human speech. Sometimes they had their origin in some one of the original colonies through which our whole population had been filtered; but even when this was the case it was more likely to be a perversion of a disused word.

## Pioneer Foundations

As an illustration, my attention was called during a long residence in England to a newspaper review containing a list of about forty words formerly used in Worcestershire but become obsolete. Upon examination I found that I had grown up in the free and familiar use of more than half of these words during my youth and early manhood between the years 1854 and 1880 in the Three River Country of central Iowa and that they had thus entered into speech all about me. No kind of research could trace the genesis of such usage. It is evident that at some time they had come direct from the district of birth or use; but who had imported them, or when or where he first dropped them into a new soil to root themselves so firmly was as mysterious as the origin of life. The same conclusion is forced by an examination of like words from every distinctive English district, or county; and in many cases they have been traced to their origin in the Anglo-Saxon, or Norse, or Old German.

James Russell Lowell, whose introduction to the second series of the *Biglow Papers* is still an arsenal as full of linguistic weapons as it is of delight, was right in emphasizing the narrowness of the so-called Americanisms as expounded by Bartlett and in referring the student to English origins. If he could write now with Joseph Wright's *Dialect Dictionary* before him, reinforced by Murray's monumental *Oxford English Dictionary*, he would draw further illustrations for his thesis from a mine of material unopened during his time.

Little attention has been paid to the dialect supposed

## The Foundation for Language

to be Western which, when examined, quite generally turns out to have passed mainly through a medium with something from all other districts along the way. Edward Eggleston has dealt with it, though only casually, in his introduction to the *Hoosier Schoolmaster* and has used it there and in the *Circuit Rider* — both of which, in spite of neglect, still remain landmarks in our literature. The pity is that towards the end of his always broadening life he did not deal specifically with the whole question of language as he had learned it in his native Indiana — a State richer in dialect than any other in the West or South upon which the American Pioneer worked. Its dispersion thence accounts for the complete understanding in the West of the writings of James Whitcomb Riley and for the position that he made for himself by a few years of earnest and intelligent interpretation of the life about him. Professor Schele De Vere also did some valuable work in dialect; but, on the whole, the field still awaits tillage by many competent and enthusiastic students.

### THE FOUNDATION FOR LANGUAGE

THE SPEECH and writing of the time were based upon one book — the Bible. This accounts for the archaic quality apparent in the speech of Lincoln and most other men of the period under examination. At its best estate, as used by the average farmer, it was clear, strong, direct, expressive, idiomatic, and often picturesque. The original dialects had so fused into each other that there were none of the difficulties of understanding persons from distant



## Pioneer Foundations

districts — difficulties which still present themselves in England. To all intents, as is often claimed, the English language, like the people who use it, had become Americanized. As all spoken language must be under the stress of incessant movement and imperfect training, it was naturally modified by inherited or temporary peculiarities; but, even then, because of this origin, it could not escape a certain purity.

In their ignorance many of the standard and habitual public users and the popular preachers of the time were constantly guilty of assault and battery upon the language; but when a reader was once fairly taught, nothing could ruin or seriously impair the lofty rhetoric of the Bible. The almost universal habit, in good families, of each member in turn reading it aloud tended to bring out the best and to improve the indifferent or the careless. On the whole, taking the country at large, it is probable that the average of oral expression, whether in speaking or reading, was far better then than now. When badly spoken and imperfectly interpreted by raw untrained European peasants — many of them, unfortunately, placed in the school-room as teachers — from Ireland, Germany, or other countries, or from those born in Slavic countries, or others trained in the jargon known as Yiddish, the stream of English is constantly polluted. The middle-class English of the days of Elizabeth, James, Charles, Cromwell, or the Revolution was not a bad equipment or inheritance, even when used by plain people under Pioneer conditions.

Many of the figures of speech of the time were drawn

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from animals, both domestic and wild. This perhaps applied most distinctly to the horse whose characteristics, whether as quadruped or individual, were so well known as to make him even more familiar often than his human neighbors who could speak of him without uttering a libel or challenging an answer. To the Pioneer, the dog, cow, ox, bull, mule, hog, turkey, goose, duck, chicken, guinea, along with the deer, the wolf, the bear, the wildfowl, and the snake, all afforded opportunity for comparisons and spoke the "various language" of the poet. Friends or enemies, members of the family or strangers, were likely to find themselves compared in their virtues or faults, their failings or achievements, to the particular animal whose accomplishments or characteristics they themselves knew as well as did the speaker.

Most of the people, but especially those of the West, passed through some curious currents in the development of what has come to be known as American humor. Time was when Davy Crockett, Major Jack Downing, Lorenzo Dow, Peter Cartwright, Petroleum V. Nasby, and Josh Billings (to name only a few) accompanied or succeeded each other as the protagonists and advance guard of a humor that was mostly cheap, coarse-grained, obvious, mordant, and free from resemblance to wit. It has been so long dead and buried that it is impossible to believe that it ever lived, even for a brief moment. Perhaps, after all, it was a necessary phase in the passage from the gloom incident to the hard, isolated, and truculent period into times and conditions that would make possible some com-

## Pioneer Foundations

prehension of the real wit of the time — that, among others, of Byron, Lamb, Hazlitt, Irving, Cooper, Lowell, Holmes, and Thackeray.

### NAMES AND LITERARY STANDARDS

IN THE absence of the guiding influence of the printed word, now distributed in its almost infinite variety, it is not surprising how unsettled were even the surnames of the time so far as spelling was concerned. This confusion had shown itself in English history, especially from the early seventeenth century. Wherever a name lent itself to divergence (that of Shakespeare is a good example) the conditions incident to the unsettled English spelling were exaggerated. This was notably an incident of the Pioneer life where hundreds of cases were in evidence when formal censuses became the order of the day. Often from six to ten forms of spelling — each of which ought to have been joyfully greeted by the modern spelling reformer — would spring from a single original surname, while Christian names would be twisted out of all recognition. As the families scattered themselves over remote areas the new names, having behind them neither genesis nor rhyme or reason, became fixed permanently in the nomenclature of the day.

Much of this came from the inability to transliterate foreign names, so that after they had been changed into English there followed, as the result of ignorance, a great number of forms. This was furthered also by the dropping of the Mc or Mac from Irish or Scotch names and of the

## Names and Literary Standards

O' from the former as well as the vans, vons, and des and other particles. To the new and distant generation they meant nothing, and being superfluous they disappeared. Thus, many of the best old English family names gradually took on spellings that would have delighted the fancy of Charles Dickens (always on the lookout for the fantastic and the out-of-the-way) and would have bred despair in the mind of careful students like Professor Ernest Weekley. This condition applied especially to the journey through the great wilderness where illiteracy prevailed to such an extent for so long a time.

This conclusion did not apply in such large measure to New England, where family origins were better known and the proportion of foreigners as redemptioners and transported convicts was also smaller than in the southern and middle colonies. It is probable that in this way a far greater number of words was added to the language — all of them unmeaning or ignorant — than from the new creations, modifications, or additions from aboriginal sources. All this had a discouraging effect upon the study of family history and tended to repress undue pride of ancestry, because the visible link with all that had gone before had been so broken that no amount of research would serve to weld it.

The funny old Puritan Christian names had almost worn themselves out, although those of Old Testament origin remained in common use until they were excluded by the decline of religious interest and the revolutionary effects of civil war. If such names were found now in any con-

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siderable number borne by persons under fifty, they would be at once put down as Jewish; then they were the regular cognomens of a fair proportion of the population as distinctly Christian as possible.

The tendency to high-flown language was seldom found among other than the ignorant and the pretentious—who in this regard are generally synonymous. There was, however, much of monotony in form, a tiresome repetition of word and phrase, a general use of the same Biblical quotations, and that resort to tautology so common in children or persons with narrow and restricted vocabularies. Wherever found, these faults are the almost necessary outgrowth of religious fervor, whether it comes from ritual or from reliance upon extempore prayers—the fixity of form being about as conspicuous in one case as in the other. In either case it is the outcome of a narrow culture or a reliance upon the spoken word rather than upon meaning which comes from a wider reading. It is this, more than any other feature, that makes the writings or utterances of Cromwell and other Puritan leaders so tiresome, and takes them effectively out of any possible category of literature with life in it.

These people were too much absorbed in their own necessary work to write poetry, which seems to be the form taken by primitive literary expression; but this absence could not entirely repress the activities of the inevitable neighborhood poetaster. However, he was seldom heard of outside the smallest of literary water-tight compartments; and so few of his efforts have survived that

## Indifference to Current Literature

during our period the great Pioneer region produced no poem worthy of anything but the caul of oblivion in which it was enwrapped when it came into the world. It still remains to be proved that the prairie, even at its best estate, can produce a real prophet of the muses.

### INDIFFERENCE TO CURRENT LITERATURE

THE VOTARIES of the much vaunted culture of our time overestimate what they are pleased to term the ignorance of their predecessors on these simple scenes because they knew little, relatively, about books. None would presume to deny that this knowledge adds much both to the attractiveness and power of men and women; but much depends upon whether the proper foundations have been laid in long and familiar use, in native abilities, in industry, in an irrepressible curiosity, and in a desire that never tires for knowledge : in other words, in the solid character that makes the acquirements incident to book knowledge really practical.

Not every child had access to the best of the old-time classic books now put into the hands of every youngster, whether fitted or not by age, nature, desire, or training to assimilate them; but, even in the times of greatest literary dearth there was an understanding and appreciation of *Robinson Crusoe* and the counterfeit enactment of its scenes on every little stream or river that brought it into the practical ken of boys who could really understand it; every character in *Pilgrim's Progress*, the greatest parable of secular authority in the history of literature, was real

## Pioneer Foundations

to those who knew it; *Gulliver's Travels*, the least fitted of all books in the world for children, with perhaps no complete copy in an average county, was, in spite of these lacks, borne in repute along the stream of life to brighten the way of many, young and old, who never saw it in printed form.

It is often forgotten that the story teller's art is perennial and not limited to wandering Arabs. Just as the Bible and all other great religious codes were carried along on the currents and in the eddies of human memory, so the other great stories of all time found their echoes: often faint and imperfect, all the way across remote deserts and hampering oceans, through the wilderness on to the distant prairie. There was no boasting about a knowledge of them; but the fundamentals were there firmly fixed in the minds of an order of men and women prepared when the time came to absorb with an appetite that nothing could appease the fuller meanings of the best literature.

It is only too true that the current writing of their time and country was little known or cultivated directly. Irving, Emerson, Prescott, Hawthorne, Poe, Longfellow, Whittier, and Lowell, through whose stratum the world was then passing, were not much read in the Pioneer region; and yet even they had their influence, much like the older, more classic productions of the language by means of the echoes which vibrated through the intellectual air of the time. A like conclusion applies, though in a smaller degree, to Dickens, Thackeray, Wordsworth, and Tennyson. The numbers of readers and students were relatively small, but

## Indifference to Current Literature

these included the active minds given to communicating freely the results of their reading and knowledge. Cooper and Scott, representing the romantic school, had everywhere within the range of the Pioneer an estimation and an influence that left a distinctive mark upon the life of that time. I have already described how the schoolbooks of the day, often crude and unsatisfactory, gave at least a taste of the best poetry in the language, and of American prose from the earlier orators upon whom our people were then dependent for utterances of high character.

Altogether the reading of the day, outside the theology and current politics, was sporadic and irregular; but such as it was, it was fairly good in character. There was not then the present resistless flood of bad or indifferent novels; and, against what there was, prejudice had erected a dike of opposition which, with all the narrowness and injustice incident to its wholesale generalizations, would have been fairly effective as a barrier. These Pioneers were nowhere or at any time essentially a reading people as that term is now understood; but their good sense and practical ability, added to the imagination and initiative that had made them do their work, were so kept in exercise that when the time came for a different and higher order of culture these qualities could be turned into new channels.





CRIME, PAUPERISM, AND DRUNKENNESS



*DEALING WITH CRIME*

It is not my purpose to treat in any detail the workings of the criminal law. These dealt with offenses and felonies under rules inherited from many generations of orderly government under recognized forms. All the commandments were still supposed to be valid and to emphasize their existence with something resembling an equal force. The time had not yet come when immorality was concentrated into the seventh of that important series — the other nine standing more or less in an attitude of suspension or repeal. So, with its usual leisure the law took its course within a due and reasonable measure of its traditional solemnity.

I have already briefly described its agencies and methods. It now becomes necessary to pay some attention to the treatment administered to crime and social offenses outside the forms of law. These methods were revivals from earlier and less orderly times — all along the line of human development. They had become so fixed in the mind and habits of the American, from the earliest days of his struggles, as to become themselves a new form of common law with the power and prescription that inhere so firmly in precedent. It was just as natural for the American to punish, outside the law, certain moral or political infractions as it was to rely upon the title to land once it was passed to him from the Federal government, or to expect

## Pioneer Foundations

that the State of his residence would provide regulations under which he could make roads or establish systems of public education. While he believed in order and its maintenance under the forms of law he was none the less inherently a rebel. If the law did not provide a way to give him what he wanted, and that quickly, he was prone to find a method of doing it for himself. He had been compelled to assume the task of protecting himself against the Indian, and he soon concluded that there was no way to do this other than to shoot at sight; so that, for more than a century, Indians were the only big game open to him, with the usual result that in the end it was the hunter and not the game that won.

### *CULTIVATING REBELLIOUS QUALITIES*

It is not necessary to discuss the righteousness of the Pioneer. It is enough to record what was done and to recognize what its effect was to be upon successive generations. When it came to dealing with still larger issues this man could not be expected to become a miracle of patience. When the home government under which he had grown and prospered, whose people were his people, proposed something that he did not like, something that did not square with his ideas of freedom, license, or interest, instead of working it out within the forms of that law under which he had lived, he took a much shorter cut by enforcing, now a non-importation agreement, and again throwing overboard an insignificant cargo of superfluous tea. It matters not what it is called, it is even still less

## Cultivating Rebellious Qualities

important that this policy — like that of shooting at sight all Indians, men, women, and children — seemed to succeed; it was still cold-blooded, deliberate, unmitigated rebellion, with probably less real warrant, either in right or policy, than almost any similar movement in history.

In the beginning this violence was related mainly to political action or initiative of some order. Almost any kind of a movement might develop into the use of force. A protest against excise taxes precipitated a whiskey rebellion in western Pennsylvania; and agitation against the manorial system brought anti-rent mobs into activity for many years in New York where also the anti-Masonic party promoted riots; the anti-slavery agitation, wherever it became active, was responsible for loss of life from one end of the country to the other; even the earlier, no less than the later, movements against liquor were accompanied by the wanton destruction of property and occasionally by loss of life; while the Know-Nothing movement was little more than the apotheosis of violence directed, in physical form, against religious opinion.

Everywhere, early or late in our history, the tendency to influence public sentiment or to reach a quick conclusion either by the use of a threat to life, safety, property, or tolerance, has been so strong as to be irresistible. When to this was added the personal violence among settlers, owing to the clash of the castes which almost unconsciously formed themselves, there has always been organized a power to invoke popular turmoil and to threaten or execute bodily peril. Feuds or transmitted personal quarrels cut only a

## Pioneer Foundations

small figure in the free Pioneer States; although, now and then, one imported from Tennessee, Kentucky, or Missouri, would feed fat its grudges, wherever in the changes of residence the parties to it might find themselves; but they seldom spread beyond the families involved. As their number would be small in new scenes when one group killed off the other the law made short work of the survivors and thus the fire burned itself out for lack of fuel.

If men among the low part of the population killed each other in drunken brawls or about women, the conclusion was generally reached, in the language of the day, that "it was good riddance to bad rubbish", and the law took its course without interference and with reasonable celerity. If an individual of these types murdered a really useful person his trial would be hastened, and in general condign punishment would result. If he was acquitted against what was thought to be the evidence, that is, against public sentiment, he stood a good chance of looking up at a limb through a quickly improvised noose; and if the case was flagrant, his lawyer, too, would often accept an invitation to leave the county between days. But the number of murders was small (how much of a deterrent the certainty of some kind of condign punishment may have been, cannot be estimated) and so the mob had little permanent use for itself, and had to be raised for its own specific work that was immediately in hand.

### DEALING WITH HORSE THIEVES

BUT the popularity of Judge Lynch was not due, in an

## Dealing With Horse Thieves

early day, to the verdicts he rendered and the executions he made for acts of personal violence; his jurisdiction was much more extensive. His biography has not yet been written — perhaps because he is still alive. Theodore Roosevelt has dealt with him rather sympathetically, though far from exhaustively, so far as his operations in Tennessee and Kentucky were concerned; and notices of his activities were scattered through the vagrant annals of the Pioneer march.\*

He is not a new figure, not even American in origin, lineage, or method; but he had made here for himself a place nowhere else equaled. His real judicial function has been the protection of the farmer from the operations of thieves who would steal his plough, his ox, or his horse. He was elected very early in history and, so far as can be discovered, has never been defeated, unseated in a contest, deposed, recalled, or impeached. He first reveals his presence, with the same duties he has since performed, at a time far beyond the memory of man, before writing was invented, or Troy was besieged,† and reappears, from time to time, as immortal as theft and inviting a punishment as implacable as Nemesis. Leaping complacently over unnumbered centuries he may be found in the early days of

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\* *The Winning of the West* (Standard Library Edition), Vol. I, pp. 184-186, with the citation of many local authorities; Vol. II, p. 309, note.

† Their [the Phrygians] devotion to the plough may be traced in almost the only fragment of their legislation which survives, the law which punished with death the crimes of slaying a ploughing ox or stealing a plough. — Percy Gardner's *New Chapters in Greek History*, p. 37.



## Pioneer Foundations

Virginia\* where indentured servants stole horses, bridles, saddles, and implements, not only to escape from temporary bondage, but to enable them to begin life in their destined neighborhoods. The Pioneer still knew how to deal effectively with their offenses against the owners of the primary needs of production.

It is not surprising then that in the mixed West this most serious of crimes should find condign punishment, or that no community within its boundaries from East to West or from North to South should be free from this terrible agency for meeting an evil. In the beginning, both the crimes and the punishments were sporadic; but as life grew less simple, when pioneering was a business and not an incident, both the thieves and their enemies became organized. It was not long until protection societies, or vigilance committees, were scattered over every county where needed, and it was not long until they were so federated that they could act in concert. Only a little while later, just about the close of our period, they were even legalized, so that when they went out to hunt a thief, they were, in effect though not in name, the authorized agents of the State.

### THE HORSE THIEF AS A TYPE

THE PSYCHOLOGY of the horse thief, the man who became a deliberate outlaw, would be an interesting study but space will permit only a passing reference to him and his baneful character, to the dread which he excited in the

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\* Bruce's *Social Life in Virginia*, p. 244.

## The Horse Thief as a Type

community — a dread much greater than that inspired by the pirate, bandit, the earlier footpad, or the burglar, with whom he had little in common as to methods. He was more mysterious than any of these social pests. The sanctity of the horse as well as the absolute dependence upon him, has already been described. The horse thief had the qualities of these outlaws, but he was more; in the decrees of nature, the horse and man were called upon to work together not only in subduing the earth but in both making and preserving their own subsistence. Without the other, neither would, under the workings of economic law, have come into the world and once here neither could have lived alone. The fact that one was the property of the other did not separate them in interest or attachment. One owner of a piece of land might succeed another; but behind them all stood the horse as an unchanging fief, more distinctly bound to labor than was the slave or the man who had lived under the feudal system — and the horse thief was their common enemy.

He was a distinctive product of the Pioneer area in which he principally operated and of every part of it. He was, generally speaking, a robust fellow of physical vigor, able to work to the uttermost limits demanded by the material surroundings in which he was placed; but his first qualification for success in his trade was laziness. This quality was so much more firmly seated than his strength or his morals that there was everything to drive him on along the line of least resistance. When he had chosen there was no other way; drawn on by fate, once a horse

## Pioneer Foundations

thief was to be one forever. There was so much fascination in the game that, learned and played with expertness, it became irresistible. It required some courage to enter a stable in the dead of night and to take from it some fine animal which, quietly resting from its labors, was the dependence for daily bread of men, women, and children. Nothing in the form of the sneak-thievery, which such an act connoted, was quite so low and mean or in the case of capture more sure of condign punishment. If under the forms of law such a thief escaped prison, he ran into the quickly improvised slip-noose that awaited him, somewhere along his line of escape, at the hands of a vigilance committee.

As a result of this peril, the horse thief was seldom drawn from the useless, hopeless descendants of imported criminals and wantons. They had neither the physical strength nor the moral courage necessary for this job. Among the ranks of society just above them were men of more stamina, of somewhat better origin, less open to suspicion, who could be depended upon to recruit this dangerous calling; for, by it, these men and their families lived. Inside given social lines, such an adventurer might be developed almost anywhere.

The sons of small farmers whose fathers had failed from want of industry, or had been dragged down by low marriages; now and then though rarely the sons of artisans who had had like experiences; a journeyman miller or teamster, or a wagonmaker, though seldom a blacksmith or his apprentice, might send forth a degenerate scion de-

## The Horse Thief as a Type

terminated to live upon the labor of others. Occasionally, such a thief would become a farm-hand, for a time, in order to familiarize himself with the horses of a neighborhood, though it was seldom that he would poach upon the immediate stable of his employer—leaving this to an associate. Such a man, like the burglar-servant of our day, would naturally have every advantage in the playing of the game. He would fit himself for his avocation by such tactics in many places so that he could make his escape much easier than the simple amateur who only knew the neighborhood in which he had lived for a little while.

The pursuit of this game was made easy by the fairly complete knowledge that existed about every horse. From the time colts were broken to saddle or harness, almost from foaling, they were interesting figures in the community, scarcely less intimately known than their owners or the boys who handled them and to whom in many cases they belonged. Their size, qualities as riders or drivers, speed, marks, disposition, all these were as familiar as household words. There was, therefore, little difficulty in making a selection. The assured fact about a stolen horse was that he was pretty certain to be a good one—complimentary to the taste of the thief and likely to command a fair price once he could find refuge somewhere while laying new plans. It was not unusual for him to sell such a horse during the day and to steal him from his new owner on the next night. Thieves often operated in pairs at each end of alternating or shifting routes when, by deft exchanges which would have deceived the very elect among

## Pioneer Foundations

horse-traders, a considerable area could be covered with comparative safety. Fairly successful thieves might hope to handle and sell (often working them for short intervals in busy seasons) from six to ten horses in a year. At a time when farm wages ran from ten to sixteen dollars a month, the returns from this calling were not always of a losing nature.

### *THE PIONEER AS A DETECTIVE*

THE EXISTENCE of the disease produced a remedy. The Pioneers were not so lacking in originality or in ability to coöperate as to permit such a peril to continue unchecked. The formal processes of law were everywhere invoked, but their effectiveness left much to be desired. They were slow, and the difficulties in the way of getting positive proof were many and serious so that numbers of known thieves often escaped and then moved on with new license to continue their work in other fields. The vigilance committee, with a machinery constructed outside the law, adapted its methods to varying conditions as it found them, and kept up its watchfulness with an energy that knew no abatement. Dealing with a crime of unspeakable baseness, it used with effect that intimate knowledge of all the persons in a community in order to study the habits and the employment of suspicious characters or families. Its members made no pretense to an innate detective gift, but they would work in common on the lines laid down by common sense, and as a result they thought they knew how to put two and two together.

## The Pioneer as a Detective

Once a man of the horse thief type was under suspicion, surveillance followed so soon that it was not long before his movements and motives were pretty well known not only in his own immediate surroundings but in remote districts. All the talk about the recklessness of the Pioneer in dealing with this type of offender, of his disregard for human life, and of his failure properly to investigate suspected men, is sheer libel. In that long march, first West and South over the mountains into Kentucky and Tennessee, then North and West again, during which many thousands of the worst public enemies this country ever knew were destroyed as if they had been rabid wild beasts, nothing is more certain than that the proportion of innocent men sent to a violent and disgraceful end by vigilance committees was smaller than the unfair convictions for all orders of crimes in the regular courts of old and settled communities.

It was not in the watchfulness of suspected individuals alone that the protective organizations showed their activities. Some of the most exciting events in the chronicles of neighborhoods were found in the occasional gathering of practically all the reputable citizens in them to hunt for some particularly bold and offensive horse thief whose presence was suspected or known. On such occasions it is much to be feared that at times the historic, time-honored rights of search were violated and that persons suspected of harboring thieves were subjected to many annoyances inconsistent with prescriptive or ordinary neighborliness. Most of these midnight expeditions were too apparent,

## Pioneer Foundations

often too noisy, to achieve much success. The quieter processes incident to the watching of the haunts of the suspected, greater attention to the woman in the case, were more likely to reveal the presence of a suspect upon his return or his passage through after some marauding expedition. The facilities for escape were unusual. The sparseness of population, the long distances, the shallow streams and fords, the river bottoms at fairly regular intervals, the facilities for hiding among a low population, distributed with due proportion over the whole, were all favoring elements; but the most favoring was the proximity of the settled districts in adjacent or neighboring States.

Once in or out of such a State, an offense committed in another did not subject a criminal to arrest or legal punishment in the changed jurisdiction; so the game of crisscross was always available. In such States there was a tendency for each to blame the other for incursions by thieves, but wherever found they belonged to the same class, employed the same methods, and often worked in combination with each other. Thus the Iowa, Illinois, or Missouri horse, missing from its owner on one day, might be peacefully working a day or so later in the other State. With the thief, its reputed owner, patiently biding the time when he could sell it, repeat the operation in his new temporary neighborhood, and return, as the criminal seems prone to do, to the place of origin. Even the universally prevalent custom of trading horses worked well in the hands of a thief, who might easily exchange his latest acquisition ten or twenty miles away and not only leave

## How the Peril Was Met

an innocent purchaser with the bag to hold, but probably while escaping obtain in the process enough boot-money to meet the immediate wants of himself or his family and confederates.

In short, here was an organized trade with rules and regulations, with its practitioners fitted by nature and trained by apprenticeship to carry it on, working with that skill and cunning which only human villainy can know or summon at will. The law was almost powerless to protect the simply organized, sparsely settled community from such enemies; so it was necessary that it should protect itself. It could not do this by gentleness any more than a lion can be tamed by the squirting of rose water. It demanded a firmness that could not safely waver for a moment; a combination of ingenuity and unity that should not recoil; a watchfulness that might be offensive but that certainly must always be in action; and, most of all, a coolness of head that, while hanging the guilty without a show of thought or mercy, would protect the innocent. Few mistakes must be made in dealing with a scourge even though it did take on the shape of a human being. All these qualifications were in evidence from the real beginnings in Kentucky and Tennessee and along the way, as settlement went forward into ten new States.

### HOW THE PERIL WAS MET

THE SYSTEM was simple : a representative gathering of the best men in a given neighborhood, after patience had been exhausted and watchfulness had gone unrewarded,



## Pioneer Foundations

caught a horse thief red-handed. His victim, in all probability, was some man, often a newcomer just starting in life with neighbors to whom he had commended himself as honest, industrious, God-fearing, the very stuff of which from 1607 onwards heroes, both for peace and war, had been made. Perhaps the thief was his near neighbor, often long suspected, or sometimes a sly new offender who had awaited opportunity to develop his innate propensities.

When caught, the horse thief found himself face to face with men whom he knew—men without concealment, hiding behind no masks, not blustering or talking overmuch, but stern, resolute, knowing their power without any idea of abusing it and knowing equally well their man and his kind, with no more pity for him than they would have felt for a wolf or an Indian. Under a tree with long straight branches, with a rope ranging in size from a bedcord to the largest available, or with a young but strong and flexible grape-vine, with no light but the stars, the accused was generally accorded the right to tell his own story.

Sometimes, though rarely, this was effective; now and again, a poor wretch was able to melt these hearts of iron by some sort of excuse, by proof of innocence, by a promise of restitution or of good behavior; but, in general, every word forged a new link in the chain of guilt. There were no exhortations, no appeal to prayer, as in most other human emergencies during the period, no black cap, nothing but the signal or the word of command, as the rope thrown over the limb was caught by a sufficient number

## Dealing With Petty Offenders

of men to raise the weight four or five feet from the ground with sufficient strength to hold it—and then the end. As the Pioneer believed in hell and was not much impressed with the effectiveness of death-bed conversions even for himself, he was not over careful to invite them in behalf of some degenerate horse thief, who whatever other favors might be granted generally passed into the next world unshriven and unblessed. The victim might ask and receive assurance that his family would not be permitted to starve and the pledge would be so kept that in many instances its members were better off than before; but this was all arranged before the execution under the shadow of the improvised gallows, often with a guard for a day or so lest some effort should be made to claim his body. As the mad dog dieth so perished the horse thief.

### *DEALING WITH PETTY OFFENDERS*

THERE was another human pest (first cousin to the horse thief) with which the method of dealing was scarcely less short and equally effective. This was what might be termed the sneak thief of the rural community who was a figure as remote as the time when the rights of the individual to the accrued earnings of his labor were first dimly recognized and conceded. In the Pioneer life all along its line of progress this man, belonging to the lowest order of civilized social life, followed every new series of caravans bearing movers to their homes, settled down among them, not as a landowner or a regular worker but

## Pioneer Foundations

as a squatter either on the outskirts of the neighborhood or in the village that formed its core.

By himself or with a worn-out, ill-kept horse, he did small odds and ends of work, lived in a miserable hut, either abandoned by others or built for him, sometimes cultivated illy an acre or so of cleared land on the shares, and by the aid of a slatternly wife surrounded himself with a large family ever reproducing after their kind. He would hunt the small game in the woods, and in reward would get an occasional squirrel or rabbit, trap a quail or knock it over out of the bevy gathered together in protection from the severe cold or the driving snow-storm; or he would sit unweariedly for hours alternately sleeping or watching for some unwary fish. He might even catch, now and then, a muskrat and get a few cents for its pelt; in brief, he was a sort of gleaner from the garbage pail of this little more than inchoate industrial society, taking what nobody else either wanted or could afford to have. Sometimes, indeed often, he and his family would borrow, which with them was merely a synonym for begging, return being far from their minds.

Just as the barnacle attaches itself with equal satisfaction to a new ship as to an old one, so this parasite, human in form, was indifferent about where on earth he should eke out his always useless existence. He had neither the wit nor the courage to steal horses; he lacked even the physical stamina which would have enabled him to ride away on one to a place of temporary safety; but in obedience to a law of nature he had to exist somehow. Un-

## Growing in Boldness of Theft

willing to do this from his own energy and labor, another way had to be found and it naturally lay along the line of least resistance. The only resort known to him was petty theft. The easiest thing to steal was corn which was universally produced, easy of preparation, the most nutritive of available foods, and the loss of which was the most difficult of discovery. Great, well-filled corncribs made of rails stood near to every barn, often not even protected with a covering of straw or hay or even of planks or rails. Much corn remained in the fields all winter, sometimes in cribs, often in rude heaps, and more often on the stalk. As labor was required to gather it the latter was pretty safe from incursion.

There was hardly a neighborhood without the tradition of some miserable creature who, when offered corn to relieve the necessities of a starving family (just as one Roman Emperor distributed the dole of corn in the shape of bread) did not ask the question, "Is it shelled?" After corn, chicken coops and hog pens were most subject to raid. An occasional turkey would be missed; the miller, if in any way careless, would lose a bag of meal or flour. In fact everything in the form of food that could be taken at the minimum of risk was open to incursion of social enemies of this order who, though sometimes small in number in the beginning, always tended to increase both by nature and immigration.

### GROWING IN BOLDNESS OF THEFT

It was inevitable that such a population, sufficient in num-

## Pioneer Foundations

ber to be a force and so sunk in depravity as to make redemption next to impossible, should go further as depredators. Whilst they limited themselves to the taking of food, their offenses, almost their presence, were overlooked. But, in the course of time as they became emboldened, frequent raids were made upon tool or machinery sheds or the equipment incident to stables. The theft of ploughs became common; the double-trees or single-trees of wagons, and occasionally even a wheel, were missed; bridles, collars, lines, tugs, or a one-horse harness would disappear. This thieving which outwardly seemed petty was really serious. It was hard to detect because the lost articles would be exchanged for a like lot so that each would be shifted from one neighborhood to another. It was easy to know that such sneak thieves were in the neighborhood and only a little more difficult to satisfy the victims about the personality of the marauders. The losses, always most common in the busiest times, were hard to replace even if resources permitted. This wearing-away process would often go on in a township for years without affording an opportunity to catch the culprits.

Owing to the migratory habits of these people, they could steal enough such articles in the fall of the year when farmers were both busy and careless to provide themselves with a supply sufficient to carry them to another settlement. In such cases, as they had no permanent attachment and would never be missed, they could pull up stakes and be off into another county or State beyond the danger of arrest. In general, legal processes would have

## Growing in Boldness of Theft

been useless, as sufficient evidence would be impossible of procurement. For those that remained fairly permanent fixtures, there was always the chance that detection would come. Farmers who missed some necessary parts of their outfit had a Sherlock Holmes gift for following clues. Most of the lost articles were light, and so were carried away; if, like a plough or a wheel, they were bulky enough to demand hauling, then that gift which enabled the Pioneer to detect a wagon track as a hound would scent a fox, or an Indian would follow a trail through a pathless forest, a wobbling wheel, or a failure to track, or some other peculiarity would be noted in the early dew or frost, often with success, but seldom with an immediate attempt either to recover the property or to arrest the thief.

Nothing must be done in a hurry and many confirmations of guilt must be had before anything serious was attempted. After the case was finally made up there would be time for action. Then the regular vigilance committee, or one improvised from the actual victims, would move with a vengeance. It would meet, take with it one or more of the culprits, stop under the convenient tree with the same kind of available limb that proved its usefulness in more serious cases, and there the thief, faced by his neighbors, would be formally tried. There was no torture, no threat, no third degree, not much talk outside leading questions, every word pertinent to some case familiar to the various questioners, and the direct though surly replies. If the culprit refused to answer, the inquiry went on its own way, each bit of evidence being presented, and

## Pioneer Foundations

then a vote would be taken. Now and then, though rarely, the accused would be dismissed, and ordered to leave the neighborhood within a given number of days or hours under a pledge to go a specified distance and to report his stopping place. Generally he was hanged out of hand, and often, in contrast to the horse thief his body was left swinging in the woods until some passer-by would find it and either cut it down or report the fact to his family or the authorities.

### MOBS FOR MURDERERS

IN THE unrest and crime which followed the Civil War a new and more wanton kind of violence asserted itself. Murders greatly increased in number and were often accompanied by a peculiar, almost unspeakable brutality. As the result of so much bloodshed there grew up steady, persistent movements against capital punishment. None of them succeeded in permanently changing the law, but the agitation had such an effect upon juries that it became difficult to secure convictions even in flagrant cases. When such vicious criminals were given short prison sentences, the resentment aroused in the neighborhood was so deep that, in a good many instances, a terrible vengeance was wreaked. Some victims would be taken from the custody of sheriffs and hanged, with all the circumstances that cruelty would suggest, to lamp posts, scale frames, or trees. No inquiries were made by such mobs, and not a single suggestion of mercy would even be whispered. The scenes being in towns or villages, mobs were composed of a

## Mobs for Murderers

different class of men; but the motive was the same. The one produced the other in that violence had so grown by what it fed on that no limit could be placed upon its action or upon the form that it might assume. It was many years before it wore itself out—not, indeed, until a stricter enforcement of the law had replaced the looser methods incident to the disorganized life of the early days.

A man of an inquiring cast of mind might well suggest that the successors of these sturdy people—only little more than a generation away from them—might, with both propriety and charity, exercise these virtues when criticising the outbreaks of mob violence in the South resorted to in punishment for the most serious and awful of the crimes known to mankind. In the later case, as in the earlier, the instinct for self-preservation was so deeply implanted in a people that it could not be suppressed. It was frightful in each class of cases; but it also showed that the power to punish or avenge could be used in what was assumed to be the last resort. The existence of this tendency to violence is not an accident, and there is no indication that it has been crushed; indeed, it is doubtful whether it ever will be overcome in the extreme so-called democratic societies towards which the world seems more and more to be tending. The populace wants its own way whether or not this way accords with the forms of law.

It is scarcely necessary to say that the Pioneer was not much given to softness in the form of sympathy, or a show of it, for criminals of any kind. As he had to take for himself any punishment he had incurred for infractions



## Pioneer Foundations

of physical, moral, and social law, he was not more likely to snivel over an accused thief than were his women folk to send floral offerings to condemned murderers. For him prison reform, in its modern sentimental sense, did not exist because it made no appeal to his sense of right. He was not cruel; neither in any real sense was he hard or unrelenting; but he did believe that society was entitled to protection; that every man was strictly responsible for his own acts; and that he should not be permitted lightly to escape. He himself was living in the midst of hardships and trials, a fact which he viewed as being, in a sense, one of the penalties he must pay. Life itself was encompassed by so many difficulties that had in them no taint of moral obliquity. The punishment without mercy of the bad man illustrated the Pioneer's highest conception of justice. Indeed, it was his tendency to insist that these two qualities must go hand in hand—that mercy should be tempered by sound sense and that justice was never more just than when it was carried out with celerity and sureness.

### *CARING FOR THE POOR*

PROVISION was made under the Pioneer laws everywhere for the support of the poor. This was the inheritance from the country of origin as modified by new material needs and conditions; but more by the sense of independence that gradually came to dominate these people. Living in the midst of assured plenty with the bounties of nature all around them, this plenty and these bounties had to be won by hard work persistently maintained and faith-

## Caring for the Poor

fully endured from the earliest days of each individual life. It was as true of America, as Douglas Jerrold said of Australia, "Earth here is so kind, that just tickle her with a hoe and she laughs forth a harvest"; but in the one case, as in the other, it was necessary that somebody should do the tickling. The absence of the artificial, the small amount of labor necessary to maintain existence, and ample return that always rewarded even the least effort, taken in connection with the spirit of hope inherent in such types and under their own surroundings (developed as a necessity of their lives) made anything in the way of pure charity hateful to him that gave and hurtful to him that received.

This spirit had so pervaded the English peasant that it made the thought of going to "the house", that is, the workhouse, powerful as an incentive to plod on even under awful conditions. It was a strong deterrent from idleness. This racial independence had developed into little less than a mania and it was never more striking than in the American Pioneer. He would tax his ability and means to help any individual—man, woman or child—that came under his notice; but this help was so rendered in order that, first or last, the beneficiary should be enabled to help himself.

Such a soil did not encourage the sprouting or growth of the plant of indiscriminate charity. The binding out of poor children, mostly orphans, was gradually abandoned as settlement went further. It was a bad almost wholly vicious system under which many victims, often of good

## Pioneer Foundations

family, were turned over to the tender mercies of foster-mothers of the worst type. Many of them were almost driven by cruelty and neglect into the uncanny ways which made a permanent impress upon their young lives. Beggars were few, as even in that late day vagrancy laws were enforced with a good deal of rigor. Little account was taken of the modern theories or developments relating to physical or moral degeneracy in any of its forms. There was little insanity and its few hapless victims, if poor, were generally consigned to the county house or supported in their own homes by small sums doled out by the authorities of a county or a township. Their treatment, when it was not so cruel as to verge upon the criminal, was seldom other than deplorable; epilepsy was common and doctors knew even less about it then than now; but cognizance was taken of it only in the hopeless poor who were forced to "go on the county" — as the phrase of the day described public relief. The imbecile was generally permitted to run at large — a prey, when male, to the usual teasing of boys, and, when a girl, to become a victim of the lust of some moral outlaw.

The poorhouse (it was not dignified by the old world name of workhouse) was universal; perhaps not one in fifty in the more than eight hundred counties included in 1860 within the Pioneer area was decently equipped or humanely managed. The number of inmates was so small and their character so contemptible, that few persons thought of them as serious factors. So, the poor farm merited its name and was an example of inefficiency, often

## Low Character of Most Paupers

of downright villainy. Its inmates were a few old persons, mainly women of the low type already described, or children who were the offspring of shame and neglect. To keep the needy from starvation was recognized as a duty; but when it was done, however ungracious the way, the obligations of society were discharged. In some small counties allowances were made to the relatives, but this outdoor relief was both so inadequate and so unaccompanied by any proper inspection as to give little assurance that the grants were honestly used.

### *LOW CHARACTER OF MOST PAUPERS*

THE TRUTH is that most of the paupers of the time either were or had been real or potential criminals; that many of them had come upon the county because husband, father, or son had been hanged or exiled by Judge Lynch; and that even in many such cases the children were provided with homes in the neighborhood—all these contingencies tended to blunt the sense of responsibility among the busy, working people who were trying under hard circumstances to make homes in a new community. They were firmly convinced that, by working during a small fraction of each day, any man or woman in ordinary health could provide the necessities of life. Thus, they neither had nor sought patience with what, in their opinion, was the result of laziness, bad habits, and low morals, or all combined. Everything that entered into the use of the population was needed for the workers among them; if the drone did not live, the matter was not serious after

## Pioneer Foundations

all. The modern word "unemployable" was still further from the popular mind than its foil "unemployed", with the result that they emphasized at all times the obligation to work. This demand that all should labor, at least for their own support, was based upon the universal sentiment that outside downright criminality idleness is the only disgrace that can come to individuals. In time, this feeling comes so to dominate a simple society that a spirit of harshness develops under which the unfortunate individual may now and then become confused with the useless.

And yet, with the general prevalence of this feeling no people could be more really charitable to sickness, misfortune, or affliction when obvious needs were to be supplied. If these came and the struggling man or woman was unable to prepare his ground, to plant his crops or harvest them, or to cut, haul, and prepare wood against the winter, a neighborhood of men, busy though they were with their own affairs, would come out as a whole or by turns, and do the work necessary to put the mind of the unfortunate man at ease. It would often happen that a settler, wholly a stranger to the community, would have need for that assistance which was rendered with as much good will as if he had long been able to do his part in the neighborhood of his choice; but it was generally based upon the scriptural doctrine, "to him that hath shall be given." It was not a calculating charity, though it was seldom rendered except to starving or freezing widows and children of all classes unless there was a general confidence that the beneficiary, whoever he might be, wherever he

## Low Character of Most Paupers

came from, or wherever he might go, would be ready in his turn to render a like service to others.

It cannot be forgotten that these were the customs and manners of a society where, judged by the modern standards which circle about ready money, everybody was poor. Charity, like nearly everything else, had to be paid in kind; so that the modern philanthropist who, when something is to be done is disposed to put his hand into other people's pockets, would not have flourished in communities where few pockets had ready cash in them. Perhaps by reason of these multiplied claims upon strength and time the Pioneer carried upon his back quite as heavy a burden as that of his more pretentious and showier descendant. The incidence could not be shifted to a class below or to a corporation or society above : it had to be paid by each individual. Whether it was work on the lines laid down, or in nursing or bringing the doctor, or arose from the exactions of the neighbor with whom the words borrow and beg were synonyms — the burden was there and no power could shift it or honorably evade it.

To modern men accustomed to the universal appeals made for money on behalf of an individual, a cause, a group, or a class, this policy of insisting upon the making of their own way will no doubt seem harsh, almost hard; but to its operation many thousands of persons, of a type now coddled until initiative and independence are worn thin, owe the success won by their efforts and upon their merits. If some weak persons suffered from neglect or oversight, many strong ones were trained in self-reliance.

## Pioneer Foundations

### MISUNDERSTANDING OF CONDITIONS

IN DEALING with profanity and obscenity, the Pioneer has often been harshly judged, a fact due largely to the literature dealing first with the mining settlement and afterwards with the ranch. The former did not have even a chronicler, much less a poet or historian. The Pioneer, in spite of his migratory tendencies, always had about him a settledness that was the result of a distinct leadership, composed of men with a strong religious sentiment which turned them into modern Ironsides among whom patience with profane swearing or the coarseness known as bawdy could scarcely be expected. All this made them severe to a degree in their judgment and punishment. This tendency came out in the road or other public work, in social or political gatherings, in the harvest field, or at the house-raising or the log-rolling. The element disposed to use such language was thus kept well in check when within earshot of the ruling forces. When used it was only in that seclusion wherein safety lay, because while there was strictness against foul language there was no prejudice against administering physical punishment to a notorious or persistent offender of any kind. Many a blackguard found himself not only so dealt with but subjected to the process now associated with the name of Captain Paul Boycott. At home, if a boy offended he became duly the victim of the rod or had his mouth washed with soft soap, while in school the penalties were rather more than less drastic.

Much profanity was indulged in by the meaner sort,

## Misunderstanding of Conditions

and there was a share of nastiness wholly devoid of wit; but they were furtive, behind the scenes of recognized decent surroundings and at once fixed the culprit's place with those among whom he must live. No man could hold a decent position in this narrow world and use such language—a conclusion which applies with equal force all along the Pioneer's line of advance from the seacoast into and through the prairie. This life, with all its physical hardships and deprivations, with its moral and intellectual deficiencies, had its share but no more of coarse, lewd, low-minded men whose habitual speech, larded with oaths and imprecations, was vented upon man or beast, upon family or stranger, with a familiarity that revealed an inherent brutality; but their proportion to the whole was small, and they met a condemnation that was the most terrible punishment that could be meted out to offenders. The majority of God-fearing, prudent men, leaders in all the good works that lay within their sphere, conducted their own affairs and those of the society of which they were a part with a delicacy and dignity that would have adorned the life of a fine, old-fashioned country gentleman anywhere. That everyone of them worked with his own hands made it the more incumbent that he should not fail in his duty anywhere along the line where decencies ruled.

I have dealt thus fully with this disagreeable subject in order to remove, so far as any words of mine may have an influence, the impression that because this formative life was passed under rough exterior conditions, it was vulgar or forbidding. Great States, part of an organized



## Pioneer Foundations

Christian society, the fruit of ages of patient effort, are not made, and that with credit and success, by such men, and no writer whose subject and the resulting opportunities warrant him in an effort to remove such impressions should fail on occasion to add his word of denunciation of such misjudgments. It is difficult at best to understand the people who lived in such a period, but it would be impossible if such defamation was not denounced by those who know how prevalent it has been in the histories and traditions of settlement.

### *PIONEER DRUNKENNESS EXAGGERATED*

MUCH the same order of conclusions must be reached in the matter of excessive liquor drinking in the Pioneer days. At no time, in any given new settlement that could be named, were such habits so general as to deserve remark. This is so true as to make the amount of such drinking smaller than that prevailing during the same period in the more settled parts of this country or in Europe. It was quite as impossible to make a new, vigorous community out of a collection of drunkards as from a set of any offenders against decency or morals. The drinking tastes of settlers were not new customs introduced into human activity; they were the inherited or adapted incident of the time and not the products of particular places or periods.

Everywhere, they were modified by the progress of temperance movements, themselves really more the effect of climatic conditions than of sentiment or of recoil from

## Pioneer Drunkenness Exaggerated

old abuses. In the earlier days, public gatherings, house and barn-raising, log-rollings, road-making, had the accompaniment of free whiskey just as it was given to sailors or soldiers. Even then, the habit was so far from universal as not to be even general. At all times a considerable proportion of the Pioneer men, perhaps the majority, refused to drink.

For a long time, in the harvest fields pretty well over the country, a certain amount of liquor was distributed once or twice a day; but with such prudence as to avert abuse. As fruit growing developed, distilled liquors for this use were succeeded by hard cider and then by sweet cider; but as the quality of the water improved by the removal of surface impurities, it was only a few years until the habit of drinking liquor for the quenching of thirst began to decline. Probably the most efficient agent in producing this result was the increase of machinery. While the sickle and the cradle were the reaping instruments and the flail was in use for threshing, the strain upon muscle or strength (which made the excuse for the use of liquor) was much greater than when these operations had become so largely mechanical. As the same principle ran through all the industrial life of the time the effect was soon apparent. When it became clear that in the extreme heat of the wilderness or the prairie strength or efficiency could not be promoted by the undue use of distilled liquors it was only a question of time when they should no longer be considered a necessary accompaniment of any industry. This was especially the case when the

## Pioneer Foundations

passion as well as the necessity for hard work became more apparent as the Pioneer found himself still farther from a stable market.

From one cause or another the time soon arrived when the mass of the men doing the exacting work of the farm knew no other field drink than water. In a great number of cases, perhaps in the majority, the habit, or perhaps the reaction, carried these men over into the ranks of what soon came to be known as teetotalers (an awkward word but still accepted as descriptive of a class) among whom no drink stronger than coffee or tea was in use. Many even rejected the latter after the Civil War when high cost or scarcity had so interfered with their use as to break the habit. These men did not enroll themselves generally with legal prohibition, owing to their attachment to personal liberty and a conviction that it was ineffective in producing its professed results.

In course of time, this absence of use or desire inevitably checked the liquor habit in any form in the social life of the time. By 1860 this tendency was so strong that in probably four-fifths of the families of the whole Pioneer area, including always the best and most prosperous, the presence of liquor in the house in any form or its use for other than in a simple, well-regulated hospitality, or as medicine, was unknown and in like manner its taste or appearance was more and more strange to the rising generation.

Nor was this supplemented in any considerable proportion of the people by drinking at a bar or from a bottle.

## Liquor Passed Out of Hospitality

The country storekeeper of the lower, more grasping sort, often kept whiskey in the barrel and decanted it into jugs or demijohns; but, in most cases, public sentiment was so strong that even this sale was furtive. If the universal neighborhood drunkard or toper obtained from a known source a supply with anything approaching regularity, the leading men made it their business first to warn the storekeeper of the consequence of continued sale and then, without holding meetings or making other formal protest, to flood the village gutter with his stock. This was done openly, without regard to legal or property rights, and there was no recourse. If the offense was renewed, more drastic steps were taken. These sometimes took the form of riding the offender on a rail to the boundaries of the next township or county, now and then with the ornament of the usual suit of tar and feathers; occasionally, he was permitted to continue in business upon a promise to desist from what was deemed its illegitimate incident, a license sometimes coupled with compensation to the suffering wife and family of the drunkard whose bibulous tendencies had brought on such visitations. The most popular of punishments was to order such a dealer to leave the community or to take steps which would drive him into some other work or business.

### LIQUOR PASSED OUT OF HOSPITALITY

THE SERVING of liquor soon ceased to have a recognized place in the hospitality of the time. Nothing was known but whiskey, and this beverage was not then thought of

## Pioneer Foundations

as lending itself to universal table use. Beer was almost unknown outside the districts where small breweries had been built for supplying persons mainly of foreign origin. It ought perhaps also to be explained that more than their natural proportion of whiskey was consumed by the Irish. They were social beings who did not at once give up the habits of their earlier surroundings. But, even with them, when drink was no longer a necessity in order to conceal misery, its use was discouraged in their new surroundings. The change was rapid. As a church grew stronger the Catholic priests (many of them followers of Father Matthew) were powerful aids in the spread of temperance sentiment that was beneficent, practical, and never fanatical.

Where whiskey was used at all it was of the worst quality possible — not much above the grade of the high-wines now employed in cheap manufacture. In the fieriness of its taste it somewhat resembled the raw poteen of Ireland, the vodka of Russia, or the sake of Japan. It generally bore the vulgar name of “rotgut”, warranted, as one of the coarse pleasantries of the day averred, to kill at forty rods. It fully deserved its reputation and the man who permitted himself to consume it in any considerable quantity could hardly escape becoming a drunkard, entitled to what he seldom got — the pity of his fellows. The feeling about such men was rather one of horror; the Pioneer not knowing much of that charity which suffereth long and is kind, little more of mercy was shown to such offenders than to the outcast woman or the suspected thief. It was

## Liquor Passed Out of Hospitality

not a day for softness, and woe be to the individual thrown by the fortune of birth into that time and such a life with his own unfortunate characteristics.

The long, painful conquest of the wilderness and the prairie, with all its hardships, with the slow growth of the new communities, the difficulties of preserving the old ones, and its many temptations to grossness was, after all, the most potent influence in promoting real temperance. The masses who went into this great work, whenever they may have entered upon it, produced or merged themselves into other elements and forces far more sober than themselves. They did this work as the result of character and determination to make the best possible use for civilization of the opportunities that presented themselves.



*THE PIONEER'S INGRAINED CONSERVATISM*

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## ISOLATION OF THESE PEOPLE

It is almost impossible even for the keenest imagination to comprehend the wild, free, almost primitive life of those early days. Perhaps the most outstanding fact was the isolation of these people during the hundred-year period under consideration. The large influences were then working everywhere with a force at least equal to any known before their time. While the currents and undercurrents of humanity passed and repassed in the great sea of human life these people never escaped from the middle of their own island. They had brought their own religion, and had inherited and maintained those conceptions of liberty and government which, in surroundings strange to them, had been dominant for a century and a half.

The England upon which they looked, when they saw it at all, was that of 1776; and this continued to be seen until after the Civil War through the half-closed eyes of ignorance and prejudice. They knew nothing of the England re-made by Waterloo, the Reform Bill, and the taking over of India. They had long ceased to look upon it as their old home, which in spite of change and antagonisms it always remained for the colonial. As a result, it was viewed with a truculence that nothing could temper. Not even the sinister teachings of the historian, the lies of

## Pioneer Foundations

schoolbooks, or the sham patriotism of the demagogue were needed to make or foster these prejudices.

But if this conclusion was true of England, it was scarcely less in evidence in respect to other countries. When Greece made her struggle for independence, American interest in it was due almost wholly to the rhetorical support given it by Henry Clay — a support so artificial that its vogue depended rather upon the popularity of the orator than upon the cause, or its merits, a knowledge of it, or any real sympathy with it. There was a temporary interest in the narrow, artificial contest of Hungary; this, again, was the rebound from the impassioned appeals of Kossuth (a strong, nervous personality) rather than from any really deep feeling for the supposed victims of oppression. Now and then a sporadic interest was shown in Italy, Poland, or, as in 1848, about Germany or France.

Practically, the whole of this is traceable to the strong republican sentiment based upon a dim idea that every people on earth was desirous of taking the course of our own. It was not long after the Irish famine that the condition of that distressful island came to the front in this country at large; this was founded upon the personal appeal to a large charity made by immigrants who had been saved from starvation by America. Their way of showing gratitude for hospitality was by feeding fat their inherent ancient grudge against England; but, within the entire zone of the Pioneer, this Irish sympathy was neutralized by the more potent influence of a religious prejudice which nothing could overcome.

## Foreigners Nowhere Wanted

### FOREIGNERS NOWHERE WANTED

THE PRESENCE of foreigners as they came, uninvited and often without welcome, did not arouse among this original population much more interest in their countries of origin than in the immigrants themselves. The Americans of that time felt that they were fairly sufficient unto themselves. They had the Pioneer instinct and so understood each other. They had somehow a suspicion of anybody who did not speak English as an original language (a feeling due to narrowness and an exaggerated idea of the Hessians) and for religious reasons this sentiment even entered into their estimate of the Irish. They were pleased to have men and women get out of any country with a monarchical system (Kings and Queens were to them an order of ogre) but this did not induce any particular love for, or interest in, the escaping persons themselves whether as individuals or as a class. As a result, they did not care to inquire about the people, the manners and the customs, the countries or the institutions with which these new immigrants were familiar. There was always a sort of weakening pity for them, as for somebody whose misfortune, in that they were not American and Pioneer, was the greatest in the world. They had done nothing for America; so why should it, as a country or through its settled inhabitants, go out of the way to welcome such strangers, either for themselves or for anything their countries or origin could contribute.

As for the foreigners themselves, their lot was far from a happy one. They were unwelcome; their broken Eng-

## Pioneer Foundations

lish was a constant occasion for jest; and they were permitted though patronized. The loneliness of their lives, except when they came in colonies in which case assimilation was a slow process, must have been monumental. One sentiment saved them in the end. They had come, for the most part, as a result of the continental disturbances that preceded and followed 1848. These were distinctly republican and thus fitted politically into the new environment. It is true that their conception of republicanism was abstract, wholly different from the real, concrete thing into which they came, and much pain had to be endured before the two ideas were finally reconciled. They had dull lives; saved somewhat from undue suffering by their own stolid peasant instincts, and the easy consolation incident to material success, so that in a generation or so they became the fairly contented owners of good-sized farms in fertile areas. They were slowly adapted, by reason of their unimaginative natures, to the outward selfish satisfaction characteristic of their forebears in their native lands.

### *LITTLE INTEREST IN THE EAST*

EVEN the knowledge of our Eastern States was imperfect to a degree now difficult to understand. New Englanders and New Yorkers were unpopular for a double reason : they were strange because few were known, and they were the distant, unseen creditors both as manufacturers and as money lenders. The West early came to believe (as it still insists after the lapse of more than a century) that it was the only true representative of the real American

## Little Interest in the East

spirit. It knew little of the culture and wealth of which the East fondly thought itself the sole inheritor; it could have no conception of a varied industry; and the belief was overmastering that, as frontiersmen carrying civilization into new quarters, the East neither knew nor cared for them other than as it could exploit them in industry or use them in politics. There can be no doubt that around 1860 the opposition to the East throughout the great valley from the Alleghenies westward was far stronger than it was against the South. It is not unlikely that if the war had been deferred another ten years, when slavery could have continued both to weaken itself and to become milder, the alignment might have been different. Then, both the rivers and the simplicity of conditions bound the West and South together; it was only later that the railroads were able to turn the interest to the eastward — this shifting process being one of the large, outstanding results of the war itself.

In truth, it was probably fortunate for the development of the West in these early times that knowledge of foreign countries, or even of our own older and distant settlements, was imperfect. These people needed time and quiet to work out the crudeness, the imperfection, even the coarseness, of a remote Pioneer society. Otherwise, many individuals, both singly and as massed into classes, would have been insufficiently moulded into consistent form by the influences needed to give them an all-round development. It was natural and wholesome that they should take more time and in the end remain themselves rather than

## Pioneer Foundations

to become, here and there, imitators of conditions for which they were not ready. At best, the process was slow; but they came through as an evolution and not as an attempt at creation. As they took with them what they had, other things were so gradually added that the balance was never violently disturbed.

### *REMOTENESS FROM LARGE INFLUENCES*

IF THESE people were cut off from the large knowledge of the eternal physical world they were also deprived of that still broader association that comes from religion, literature, music, art, or the other elements that enter into the thing which, often miscalled culture, is still a potent force. The current and recent poetry was almost unknown. They had glimpses, though little more, into Scott, Burns, or Byron; but in general, although they were passing through the times whose atmosphere was full of Wordsworth, Tennyson, Browning, Emerson, Longfellow, Irving, Bryant, Cooper, Lowell, Audubon, Hawthorne, Prescott, Dickens, Thackeray, George Eliot, Ruskin, John Henry Newman, and a host of great witnesses, they were almost as remote from general or popular knowledge as the stars in their courses. They had one book that was both first-rate and classic; and in their moments of leisure, those with a taste for study found in it the inspiration that could both employ the mind and console the spirit.

That they gained something, while they lost much, is no doubt true; they did not have to cut their way through great clumps of underbrush in the shape of that common-

## Remoteness from Large Influences

place which springs up in the shadows of the forest. If they could not know the giants on the plains or mountains, they did not have to live with the crowd of dwarfs down in the swamps. They were narrow, they were lonely, they suffered great intellectual deprivation; but, they had a measure of relief over their descendants in what they missed. If they seldom saw or knew any single person who had ever seen the sea, much less crossed it, they had something of satisfaction in that they were not compelled to listen, as if they admired, to the chatter of ill-informed and pretentious scamperers whose only achievement in life was that they had accumulated enough money to see Europe in a month and sufficient assurance to talk or write about it ever after. Like Dr. Primrose they did not travel far; but their occasional journeys from the neighborhood of residence to and from that of origin, and occasionally still further afield, were full of an interest that was shared with all.

Men stood so much alone that they came to put an almost unnatural dependence upon themselves and thus to overlook their obligations to their own times. They were in danger of forgetting that as they owed much, nearly everything, to ancestors and predecessors, so they could not escape their duties to posterity or successors. Even then their introspection seldom took on the form of the abnormal, the insane, or the moodiness that meant peril to others, or the personal quarrel that grew into a feud. It was more likely to draw them into the mystical or drive them into a still deeper solitude.



## Pioneer Foundations

This living in isolation, day after day, whether in forest or field or on lonely journeys had a curious and often an unexpected effect upon individuals varying in degree and kind as their own characters or origins would dictate. It would come out in one man in a religious sentiment, manly, reverent, delicate, accompanied by a taciturnity that nothing could penetrate; in another there would forge to the front the most exaggerated personal fears as to his fate in another world, often ending in the lowest manifestations of superstition, or in that hysteria that seemed to lie so close to the surface, accompanied by a loquacity that nothing could check; in still another, it would issue in rebellion, a coarseness that took on the form of prurience, either in deed or in the coarsest language expressive of the grossest thoughts, or it would promote cruelty to animals or to family in word or act, ending in drunkenness and an outward show of defiance to everything around him. The real nature of the man would show itself in this life where the artificial could not help and the conventional was impotent to restrain.

### *HOW THE STRONG MAN EMERGED*

AND yet it was in this solitude (whether of the woods or the prairie mattered not) that the strong man developed both his own character and that of the society of which he was a part. It had so many compensations in itself, its quiet afforded so many opportunities for the real man to fix the limitations of the great region which he was to reclaim from the wilderness and thus to assure the ultimate

## How the Strong Man Emerged

development on enduring lines of the life that he foresaw with so much prescience.

It is almost impossible for the modern mind to form any adequate idea of the eternal charm of the impenetrable woods, or the attractions of the ever-expanding prairie. There was in both of them a grandeur which made a continuing appeal to the best type of man into whose hands their conquest was entrusted. Thus, that gloom, that inevitable touch of sadness, which are often the only features many modern students can see in this life did not discourage the mass of those who lived in the midst of them. They were rather attracted by the broad, general outlook; by the hopefulness so distinctive of their time; by the joy of living face to face with nature in all her moods; by the close association which they enjoyed with the congenial few of their kind who ventured forth with them; by the absence of the conventional and the artificial; by their freedom to worship God in their own way, even if this way were narrow; and by the ideals of government and society through which, in their belief, humanity was to enjoy a better field and a wider scope.

They did not measure these things in the terms of discouragement now so common in the circles where physical comfort tends to become the only standard, or by a culture which is too often little more than a veneer. Their descendants have no occasion to patronize or pity them, but might better realize what these men did under many difficulties, and then dedicate themselves anew to the task of preserving the foundations upon which they built solid-

## Pioneer Foundations

ly, even if rudely. They perhaps knew what they were doing and whither they were going even better than any of their successors or than many generations that preceded them upon their human scene.

It has been said by an admirer and critic of a modern Swedish novelist, Selma Lagerlof, that "gazing down a forest valley dotted with red farm-houses and cottages, she knows exactly what is happening to the inhabitants of every one of them." While the Pioneer could not have expressed this clairvoyance in words, the best of his representatives had it in a degree that was surprising even to themselves. Best of all, they were as ready to temper the loneliness within these homes as they were to relieve the heavy burdens incident to labor, misfortune, sickness, or death. They could not neglect each other.

### LONGING FOR TOWNS AND CITIES

To say that these people lived in isolation on farms remote from each other does not mean that they were reconciled to such a condition. From the beginning, however remote they might be or however few their associates or neighbors, they were planning by day and dreaming by night of towns and cities which were to be next door to every man's farm; indeed, the latter was potentially one of a series of town lots. The district was to be crisscrossed by canals and when these failed or were superseded, every county was destined in the popular imagination to have one or more railroad junctions where commerce and manufacturers were to hold sway.

## Longing for Towns and Cities

Generally speaking, the county seats were expected to contain well-filled emporiums of trade and become centers of a varied public and social life: in reality, they were curiously mechanical and the form of their real development was scarcely less interesting than their slow, tedious growth. They were situated, as nearly as possible, in the exact center of an average county—a twenty-four mile square piece of land—accessible with equal ease from each of its sixteen-mile square townships. In the beginning, they were as mechanical as a surveyor's chain could make them, as much alike in appearance on the map and in character as one egg is to another. The ever-open courthouse was in the exact center of the inevitable public square, around which were clustered the succession of stores, taverns, millinery shops, the post office, often the earliest schoolhouse, one or more churches, with residences constantly becoming more comfortable in character in the side streets. Such places in spite of their ambitions, grew very slowly; but some of them really did grow. The accretions of officials, lawyers, doctors, the teachers who conducted small select schools, often dignified by the name of academies, and clergymen of various denominations always tending to remain even when their engagements were no longer regular. These, with the necessary artisans, teamsters, stage drivers, liverymen, and the cluster of hovels on the outskirts, completed the small but ambitious urban structure.

In early days it had no separate corporate government but remained a part of the township, only reaching a higher

## Pioneer Foundations

dignity when the surrounding farmers objected to the taxation necessary even in the smallest aggregated populations. It seldom ministered, either in trade or profession, except in the law, to an entire county, but was one of a group, and as development proceeded, if it missed the railroad, was not always the most populous. It knew nothing of pavements and gutters, had a few only of the wooden sidewalks in a later time, was without gas, water supply, or sewers; its houses were devoid of baths or other sanitary conveniences, and they were furnished like the corresponding farmhouses of the day. Its smith, carpenter, or other mechanic was not, inevitably, the best in the county; its teachers, preachers, or doctors did not, of necessity, surpass neighbors engaged in like occupations in outlying villages; and, in its earlier days, before steam power came into general use, it was little likely, unless chance had placed it on a stream, to have a mill either for grain or timber.

It tended to retain the men drawn to it as county officials even when their terms were over — the remoteness of the farm proving too much for them and their families. Its contingent of preachers, lawyers, and doctors who had failed or become tired of the incessant struggle was also recruited by many farmers who as they attained some measure of prosperity sought refuge in it for its schools of gradually improving quality, and as an escape from the loneliness that finally threatened to master them. The newspapers, of which there was generally one representing each party, the small factory which in the slow economic

## The Rage for Building Villages

changes of the time came in from the county, and as the result of small combinations brought together the half dozen hands who found they could work here better in coöperation than separately. The population was also increased by the abandonment of the little town sites where ambitious surveyors had hoped to build the ever-expected metropolis.

### *THE RAGE FOR BUILDING VILLAGES*

THIS description has somewhat anticipated the earlier and more general gathering of people in villages. It is intended to cover, in hurried summary, the developments within the whole of the Pioneer area of the central or more pretentious towns up to the end of our period in 1870. Some of them were situated on the banks of navigable rivers where with peculiar short-sightedness it was hoped to build up a profitable trade. These expectations were frustrated by the floods upon which navigation depended; as they drowned out the town-sites that was the end of them. The little houses were then transferred to the adjacent hills where they were the center for the artisans necessary to the surrounding farm neighborhood. They were no more than economic incidents thus concentrated for convenience. Some of them took sufficient root to grow in a stunted way; but the whole Middle West is a series of catacombs where villages are buried.

Scarcely one of the earlier settled townships was without one or more villages where the plough long since resumed the sway it ought never to have lost. They were

## Pioneer Foundations

deemed promising in their time—the pride of the professional town-maker who had laid them out. Their corner and other lots carried the hopes of many men who surrendered to the American mania for land-owning, however small the area, and for home-making, however humble, and to the inherent speculative spirit which fully expected a Colonel Seller's return for their small investment. It was the prime belief that destiny would make them important centers of population. That they died before they were born; that their names disappeared from map or memory; that they returned to the blank prairie from which they had come; and that no local antiquarian, however industrious or enthusiastic, could now trace them, is the sad fate for which they were really brought into being.

This picture is not painted from an isolated scene or model. It limns the landscape of all the distinctively agricultural States. It but reflects the dreams indulged in even now by many men who expect that an unending series of villages will yet spring up where, reviving or repeating continental or Asiatic conditions, every farm will become a sort of attachment to churches, schools, varied amusements, and the niceties of town life thus carried into the country. The theory is beautiful, the prospect enticing; but neither American life nor any other in which the Anglo-Saxon has been a dominant factor was made in this way. A society which is neither urban nor rural, but an attempted blending of both has not yet been created in America, and until population has increased to the overflow point, as in some Oriental countries, is not likely to

## The Towns Grew Into Uniformity

become a reality in any life where the white race is the vital force.

The outcome of these county seat efforts to associate and thus to overcome, at least in some degree, the awful isolation of this simple form of life was a monotony of growth and a steady, though slow, development, well illustrated by the uniformity in the number of people gathered into both the counties and the central towns. The fertility of the land was so universal that as farm counties settled by the original type attained the age of their predecessors there was no striking difference in the population and little divergence in their characters. As the zones of settlement gradually extended, the process of equalization followed, almost naturally. The new counties filled up with a rapidity far greater than had been possible with the old, many of the latter losing; the main accretions, however, came from foreigners or other outsiders.

### THE TOWNS GREW INTO UNIFORMITY

THIS applied more distinctly to Iowa — and still does — than to any other Pioneer State. There were fewer differences in it in soil, climate, and other primary conditions; besides, it remained more strictly agricultural than any of its predecessors. It developed no large cities so that its balance was seldom upset by manufacturing, mining, or mercantile enterprises. Along its two large rivers the towns seldom became cities, and even now there is no collection of people within the State with city characteristics — none that is not as rural in temper and method as in origin.



## Pioneer Foundations

So, while their people lived and voted in places dignified as municipal corporations, so strongly was the agricultural character impressed upon them that they were, fortunately for themselves, only transplanted farmers. They lived upon the patronage of the people round about, and a large proportion was actually interested in land and its cultivation. When their sons and daughters went away to the higher educational institutions of the State they were neither the victims nor the beneficiaries of city manners. No one town community, nor all together, had any separate place as such in politics, education, or other form of social activity; and the ruling impulses remained what they had been from the beginning. This condition has disappeared in parts of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri where some degree of city influence early intruded itself into the general scheme. It was crude, without the coherence to be found in older communities; and yet, it had really produced some sign of scission in the interests and aims of a population that had acted hitherto as a unit.

This fact was emphasized in the size and importance of the county towns and their rivals, the railroad junctions — a relative uniformity, never lost, even with that increase of population under which all, like children of like age and development, have grown together. In our forty-year period (1830-1870), the capital towns had come to contain from one-sixth to one-fourth of the people of their respective counties, a proportion which has been fairly preserved into later days. The standards of industry, education, religion, general culture, and those of material

## The Towns Grew Into Uniformity

comfort and living ran pretty much the same. They had the same kind of doctors, dentists, lawyers, stores; their newspapers, churches, and social entertainments might generally have been shifted from place to place with little more friction than when one chosen part of a given reaper or a wheel of a farm wagon was substituted for another. Each sent out into the world the same type of young men and women as did its neighbor twenty-four miles away or its supposed stranger rival at the remotest point in the State, and both provided at home for the other type that fitted into its needs. In short, the general character was so uniform that both opportunity and difficulty operated in each as it did in the other. It is probably safe to assert that no other separate social experiment was ever tried in this country where so few inequalities or rifts were found between individuals of the same class, thus reared in neighborhoods widely separated. All this is true, in spite of any of the pretensions that one town or another might set up as to its own superiority or of the place that it held in the world.

The boys and girls who went out from this life into the larger world beyond were, therefore, products of the agricultural spirit and no other, whether they had actually worked on a farm or came from a town under the name and form of a county seat, or were trained in this small group of villages. This population, however much it may have varied among its ingredient individuals, was so standardized that it belonged to a type that had become settled. If it included all the possibilities of scholarship and in-

## Pioneer Foundations

dustrial achievement, the remnant that could do this work, relatively small as it was and always must be, developed from and with the Pioneer spirit. This had made the life what it was; and it was only from it that any wholesome results could possibly come, and when they did emerge, they marked the triumph of the early character and organization which they had inherited and maintained. These social tendencies fitted, too, into those political and religious ideas that came gradually to represent the larger drift under the conditions that became characteristic of the modern life.

### THE DOCTRINE OF EQUALITY

PERHAPS nothing in the history of American settlement and nature conquest has been more confusing than the doctrine of equality long asserted as something fundamental in human life and its development. Forever fixed upon the attention of the world was Jefferson's sublime commonplace that "All men are created equal". When every other claim or obligation in the Declaration of Independence is forgotten, this doctrine stares in the face every man, woman, and child that comes into the world. Originally intended to enunciate a principle as to men in the mass, it soon became an unconscious battle cry for each individual, whatever his race, origin, or color, in his relations with his fellows and the world. Taken up by the extremists of the French Revolution, the doctrine ceased to be the abstraction that the philosophers had made it and became a sort of rule of life wherever the growing

## The Doctrine of Equality

physical or intellectual power of America was able to make itself felt.

From the time of its enunciation in 1776 to 1861, it was the distinctive idea that fixed the attention of every traveler who came here from the old world. Even de Tocqueville, the most profound and sympathetic of students, fresh from the perturbations of his own country, based his study upon this doctrine and its influence upon the life which he observed with so much intelligence and sympathy. Not even the existence of slavery, with the apparent contradiction it presented, could change the general sentiment underlying our life. It merely became the stronger and gave emphasis to the counter claim that the slave, being negro, was not a man. Its concrete application to the black as by mixture he shaded gradually into a certain degree of whiteness was never rigidly settled; but the doctrine was gradually fitted to the material in which it worked.

Every infraction of it as a theory only exaggerated its expression in those practical affairs among which all men lived and moved. Even when it was enunciated, it would be interesting to know what the poor whites of the revolutionary period really thought of it — as the simple meaning it had was unfolded. The surprise with which they would greet the announcement that they were equal to anything or any man lying outside the boundaries of their own misery or that of their class must have appealed to them as some gigantic joke.

But as life is always more practical than theory would

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seem to make possible, as men breathe and live without asking why, the Pioneers started, both collectively and individually, on their journey through the wilderness to do the work that lay at their hands rather than to raise questions as to their relations with each other. It soon became apparent that this boasted equality was only an outward show; that ability and organizing capacity always revealed themselves as potent and determining factors and brought their resultant recognition; that the men who could and would do might and must; that, while class no longer existed under the recognized forms either of law or social custom, it was, perhaps, the more powerful for this very reason, being both more pervading and consequently broad-based upon people who thought, acted, and lived alike without much regard to the purely artificial distinctions outside themselves; that one man was only better than another, not when he asserted it but when he showed it in what he did or thought that was useful to all as well as to himself; that no assertion of equality avails the man who has nothing, knows nothing, or is nothing; that the common claim, "I am as good as you are", does not carry far unless and until its truth is demonstrated; that self-consciousness is of little value unless it shows itself powerful to do as well as to say; and that the foundation of real ability to work lies in that knowledge of all sorts and conditions of men and such an interest in them which can produce the intelligence and unselfishness that must travel hand in hand if progress is to be encouraged and promoted.

## Class Distinction

### CLASS DISTINCTION REAL THOUGH OFTEN UNCONSCIOUS

THE IDEA prevails with many persons who ought to know better that a false view of the doctrine of equality ran through the practical workings of this Pioneer life. The fact is overlooked that conditions so conglomerate have never more completely permeated a population distinctly homogeneous in race, origin, religion, and form of government as these people were. This variety not only came out in industry and government, but in all the manifestations of social life. In church, in school, in the management of interests either local or general, in entertainments of every sort, however narrow their scope, class difference, however unconscious, was always apparent.

In no case could the man or woman ambitious for a given work or duty be put forward unless there was some foundation in knowledge, or achievement, or inherent merit, upon which to found a claim. In spite of the modern facilities for publicity or exploitation, it still remains true that it does not bring any permanent recognition unless it is natural. No instrument or system has yet been devised that will take a man, and foist him for any length of time upon the society in which he lives unless he is fairly real. It is still as true as ever that the man if he goes up like a rocket must, because of the only solid material in him, come down like a stick.

But such equality as there was, was very real. All were turned into these open spaces with little more than their heads and hands and left to find a way out as their qualities

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befitted. The great struggles for liberty had long been over; the individual was so emancipated, in both body and spirit, that he could choose his own industrial path, follow it to the end, or branch off from it whenever he pleased; religious opinion was as free as the air, so that every man could believe what he pleased or, within limits, practice it as he chose without persecution or interference; and political liberty had come in such full measure that its perils were not found in repression but in license. This was probably the most beneficent of the blessings that had come to men, most of whom had during the centuries slowly emerged from a condition of servitude, if not of slavery.

Samuel J. Tilden thought that the most wonderful fact in civilization was the universal distribution of products under which every man could find food, clothing, and shelter every day of his life, wherever he was or whatever his circumstances or surroundings. Just as the cause must precede and is higher than the effect, so the human machinery that stands behind this fact is more wonderful than it is in itself for the reason that each man, when he comes into society as an agent and finds hunger, nakedness, and the elements facing him, is free to select among human occupations that which shall best suit his desires and abilities; in other words, he can do the work that best fits his nature. It is through this power of choice that the other man, wherever he may be reached, can pick and choose the things that he wants for exchange. It is in the application of this principle that supply and demand gov-

## How the Best Was Developed

ern the world — this being about the only law of political economy that lies beyond repeal even in the minds of those who fondly think that nothing that is established is really right or stable. It is under these conditions that competition upsets all the assumed promises that lie back of men's efforts and instead of producing a weakening and impotent equality so develops the abilities of men in association with each other as to give full scope and effectiveness to those rooted inequalities which develop the full powers that are in them and enable them to devote their various qualities to the good of society.\*

### HOW THE BEST WAS DEVELOPED

IN SUCH strenuous times, with a population so self-centered, no mere theory could stand in the way of an understanding as nearly perfect as possible of each other, of their varied gifts, and of the union necessary to success. This applied to classes as well as to individuals. Whatever their origin they started together with the same physical advantages and disadvantages. If there was timber to be cleared or prairie to be broken, if roads were to be made or schoolhouses built, all were free to do that part of the

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\* "When things follow their natural laws, when external force does not mix itself up with them, power always flies to the most capable, to the best, to those who will lead society towards its aim. In a warlike expedition, the bravest obtain the power. Is research or skilful enterprise the object of an association? the most capable will be at the head of it. In all things, when the world is left to its natural course, the natural inequality of men freely displays itself, and each takes the place which he is capable of occupying." — Guizot's *The History of Civilization* (Bohn's Edition), Vol. I, p. 89.



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work for which nature had best fitted them. They at least started with an emphasized equality, so far as resources were concerned; but the success of some or many in doing their part or more, and the failure, positive or relative, of many or some to do theirs, soon produced those marked differences which have been indicated at every turn, with the result that nobody was justified in finding in the Declaration of Independence an individual reason for success or an excuse for failure. None was exploited and none was given an unfair advantage. Whatever qualities each man had were found within himself and no appeal lay to any natural rights that either existed or had been asserted. So far as this is possible in any form of society a fair field and no favor was universally accepted as an axiom.

Life was full of aspirations — even those relatively poor indulged day-dreams, now and then — but, when attachment to ideals was swallowed up in laziness or uselessness, it is doubtful whether such an opening or promise was always helpful. When persons became inspired by ambitions — which mean a willingness to work, think, and plan — rather than by aspirations, often founded upon nothing more than a desire to have without disposition or energy to acquire — they were wholesome and inspiring. They kept all types of persons from sinking into the bottomless bogs of the peasant mind, and both restored and maintained the best traditions of the yeoman. Entirely regardless of theories, ability and character, which are always inherited and never made, counted favorably, while their absence retarded.

## Lines of Cleavage in Marriage

### *LINES OF CLEAVAGE IN MARRIAGE*

IN THE comparatively little world under review the human family was made and saved by the same methods and ideas that prevailed in the interesting legend of the Noachian deluge; it went into the social ark by pairs each of which, almost as distinctly as in the animal world, had adjusted itself by generations of development, through likeness, association, and convention, to the desires and needs of its members. As is the case among animals these lines were seldom crossed, and when they were the effect was as obvious and hurtful. And yet, the whole question of the marriage relation was made more complex and difficult by conditions that did not exist in older and more settled forms of society. These were inherent in that disparity of the sexes which marked the advance of the Pioneer from its beginning to its end.

The general law of division into pairs of like origin, tastes, abilities, ambitions, or achievements, whether real or potential, was so distinctly in force that families fell into types or classes quite as distinct in characteristics, methods of work, and contribution to the common stock, as if they had all been living in a society where caste was the most striking feature. It has been seen that these types or classes, so far as primary qualities were concerned, were three. These were neither accidental nor dogmatic. They were of this number because they were drawn disproportionately from just that many kinds of persons. There was no mystery about them, either in origin or in their preservation in ratios which had changed only slightly for century

## Pioneer Foundations

after century. Whatever form life took, these opposed types marched on through the world always together and, paradoxically speaking, always separate. They had different equipments, mental and moral, different ideas and ideals; they had ways of living which, while they might seem to shade into each other, were diverse, and they kept their respective places almost automatically and served the ends of all by serving their own.

### A ROUGH ATTEMPT AT CLASSIFICATION

AT THE risk of some repetition it will be desirable to enumerate in categorical fashion the types of people who occupied this Pioneer region for a full century, and in due course, by the close of our period, brought it into some semblance of regular development. They fall into the following general forms :

1. Good. These were the people of known origin, deriving for generations from families of recognized character without regard to the amount of accumulated property in any one or even in all together; with the education that their time and surroundings could offer; with a respectability never interrupted in their class (little account can be taken in a broad synthesis of the occasional individual black sheep, or ne'er-do-well); successful, as they had to be, in order to maintain their power and influence; and, by reason of all these qualifications they were the natural, though often unconscious, leaders in a period of construction. Upon these families which at a given time might include roughly from eight to ten per cent of the total

## A Rough Attempt at Classification

adult population, pretty evenly distributed over the whole area at every stage from the beginning to the end; organized, under general laws, when, having preceded the land surveyor, the postmaster, or the army fort, they were not compelled to do this work on their own account; there fell the civil administration, including the levy and collection of taxes, the making of roads, ferries, fords, bridges, public buildings, the conduct of charities, education, religious activities, business, the professions and the varied agencies in the complicated human scheme. For the time, they held and carried on any necessary offices or duties without interfering with their own or with the less formal public development. Their boys and girls, showing early in youth the qualities of their parents, without losing their animal spirits, were seldom rowdies in the rude schools or grossly immoral or difficult to control. There was no difficulty in training them for regular industry or in keeping them at work during or after apprenticeship, and it was only among the black sheep exceptions for them to turn out badly.

It was a rule so common as to be practically universal that these people lived well; dressed decently without show or ostentation; and gave their children the best education within their reach — rude and imperfect as it had to be. As a class, there was never any question about how they would act or what the outcome would be. The men would be active and useful, intelligent within the limits fixed by both opportunity and need; the women would be modest and helpful, and all would be industrious; the models upon

## Pioneer Foundations

which a new community, when fairly developed, would be built. They would marry, generally at the period of early mental or physical maturity, among those who were either really or potentially their own; the latter restriction being based upon the absence of a sufficient number of women to balance the men of the same type or class.

2. The second class, next below, comprising perhaps three-fourths of the whole would be respectable and sturdy, though less certain of themselves than their associates and fellows, and less dependable. For the most part, they would be industrious. Those who came out from their own ranks or caste with a higher taste or ability would, to some extent, satisfy the unexpected. If they developed qualities of leadership it would be a surprise and could have been traced, if knowledge of them had been sufficient, to some superior strain in a former generation, thus making of them the sports with which evolution deals. They seldom knew how to get the best lands, these having fallen by original entry or final purchase to the natural leaders; if they became prosperous it was likely to be due quite as much to increment from the common industrial development as to their own foresight.

Although these things were not general, among them would be found the few men who were cruel to animals, or whipped their wives, or were careless in providing against daily needs. The drinking men, the slatternly housewives, the rowdy school children, whatever their proportion, were drawn from them. They had enough to eat, but the probability was that it would be ill-prepared and

## A Rough Attempt at Classification

served in slovenly form. They were more likely to be litigious or quarrelsome; to let their livestock prey upon their neighbor's fields; to permit their houses, barns, and fences to fall into disrepair; to be badly equipped with machinery or tools and careless with what they had; to be evasive or shifty in working out their road assessments, or to become delinquent in the payment of taxes; when the time came that money could be procured on mortgage they were likely thus to create for themselves a credit which the best farmers already enjoyed upon honor or note of hand.

Among them would be found the men who patronized shooting-matches, those who cribbed their corn mainly on the stalk, gathered it through the winter as needed, or piled it up in heaps, or left it otherwise exposed to weather or to the forays of domestic animals and vermin. The conclusion must not be reached that these economic characteristics were universal or even general in this type of population; but they were not found among the leaders — otherwise they would not have led.

The industry of this type was less regular or systematic — a self-evident fact that accounts for their place. They had the honesty of their class, wherever found, though it was among them that were found the attempts to hide the crooked sticks in the middle of a load of wood; to put the big potatoes or ears of corn on the top of bag or wagon-load; or to rush to the market the animal threatened with disease. These, like the others enumerated, were far from being universal practices; but when found it was

## Pioneer Foundations

among them that they were shown. It is superfluous to say that, generally speaking, they were not good farmers although some who were imitative gradually improved under the example set by their enterprising neighbors. Many of them, perhaps the larger proportion, were drawn directly or remotely from peasant sources and did not adjust themselves easily or quickly to the yeoman conditions which had been revived upon new scenes and, unlike the same elements in Pennsylvania, not enough time had elapsed to enable them to overcome their natural tendencies. As a mass, they were well-meaning; but, both as a class and as individuals, they could not be depended upon to do anything like the part commensurate with their number. The men married among their class so long as the available female material lasted. There were, however, many instances in which for several reasons, mainly from necessity, the women were carried somewhat like the Sabines into the class above, almost always with discouraging results.

They required a longer period than the leaders to adjust themselves to new surroundings. They were less adapted to the hardships and difficulties of the new life. Within an average period of five years the constructive Pioneer, whether as a class or an individual, would attain a position of independence due mainly to the fact that when once settled he stayed where he was; while his less reliant neighbors moving forward and back were so much less of a fixed quality that twenty years would be the far more likely period necessary to insure a fair degree of prosperity.

## A Rough Attempt at Classification

By this time the enterprising class had probably doubled or trebled their original holdings and had so applied the best known methods of the time as to put and keep themselves far in the van or their children had gone out to larger opportunities.

These two types lived together in amity though there was a wide, often an unconscious, gulf between them. There was the inevitable going down from the one with only occasional going up to the other; but these interchanges were few, mostly individual and seldom permanent. The demands were so much higher than those fixed by financial success that such a shifting was difficult. Often, in the original population, the real test did not come until the younger generation went out into the world to try its fortunes when quality had its chance to show itself superior to mere quantity.

3. I have already described pretty fully and at each point necessary for an understanding of conditions, the presence of a really low type of people who, distributed everywhere, in numbers ranging probably from seven to ten per cent of the population, constantly reduced the average of industry and character. Without land or other property, idle and without settled trades, callings, or fitness for them, ignorant and depraved, they constituted, in the main, a collection of parasites. Their boys would not work in the fields, even in busy times and for good wages; their girls were prone quickly to follow their mothers and their female forebears into open or secret wantonness and to become the scourges of their neighborhoods.



## Pioneer Foundations

4. The foreign language elements settled at once and literally into their own place. They had not the gifts which fitted them to become Pioneers, having all they could do fairly to adjust themselves to their surroundings. They did not at once coalesce with the best of the original population, though they did not seriously recruit the lowest elements. They were disciplined in industry, had a deep respect for law and religion, and soon began to assume an honorable though uncertain place in the life about them; but it was a place and a life of their own. For a generation after each contingent arrived it was scarcely less Irish, German, Scandinavian, or other, than when it came, a condition that was maintained until long after the close of the period under review. This conclusion applies not alone to the final scene of the Pioneer life, but was extended over the whole area.

### THESE CLASSES NOT ARTIFICIAL

THE RESULTING classes were different both in their genesis and in their workings from those which grew out of imperialism, the dominance of the military art, the patriarchal, the periods of feudalism and chivalry, the religious quarrels of the Reformation period, or those struggles in Western Europe for an enlarged measure of liberty. In themselves they were not artificial, being neither the product of law, nor the creation of force or craft; they were the natural outgrowth of a population whose component elements, differing profoundly from each other, had started without any special advantages, except those that came from heredi-

## These Classes Not Artificial

ty, on a long hard journey over mountains, across great rivers, through a trackless wilderness, to wrest from these unfriendly surroundings the secrets they were known to contain.

These secrets were not hid in mines; the fabled search for gold did not draw its traditional crowds into a gamble with nature; no foot of it contained any of the stock features that had filled the records of romance; it had to be conquered for what lay concealed in the soil underneath their advancing steps. Outwardly all had the same chances; opportunity seemed to beckon every man to a contest in which there were to be no favors; but as they forgot or overlooked human nature, it soon became evident that no step could be taken without putting some one man or family or group to the front. The moment this was done the sense of status was developed, its realities were established, and without conscious seeking on the part of any element in this simple life differences and distinctions had taken their old place — the place they had held since the days of the cave man.

Into this state of man came marriage. As it has done through the whole of history, it proceeded along the two lines : likeness or attraction on the one hand, modified on the other by the iron law of propinquity. When possible these elements work with each other; upon occasion, they become opposing forces. So long as there are sufficient numbers of the same type of individuals of each sex to meet the demands and serve the purposes of each other and society, so long they will mate among themselves.

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When numbers or circumstances are unequal they will find mates even if, as in the case of marriage by capture, resort must be had to theft and violence. This rule drove the Spaniard into the arms of Aztec and Peruvian women and accounts for the Indian half-breed in the North, and it even unbalanced, now and then, to the hurt of all concerned, the individual English or Scotch adventurer in a region like Tennessee. In the special area under study, aside from an insignificant number in Michigan and Wisconsin, the region north of the Ohio and between the Allegheny and the Missouri was fairly free from this particular method of race dilution.

### THE WORKING OF THE PROCESS

THE BLOOD thinning process so far as it related to the Pioneer area took another form which, though limited in its operation to people of the same race and color, was scarcely less demoralizing. It produced a certain abnormal crossing of types because, under natural conditions whatever eugenists or equalitarians may say, like mates with like so long as possible. No race or people known to history has mated with inferiors or strangers or racial aliens, when it could help it—a rule that applies to classes or castes among themselves no less than to outlanders. And yet, this insidious necessity presented itself first to the colonist in the earliest days of our history and notably to the Pioneer. So long as women of his own type could be found he married with them; when these were no longer available he went out into some convenient land of Nod

## The Working of the Process

within reach or, raiding some tribe of Sabines, there sought something bearing the similitude of a woman. As he belonged to the male of the species, he was not to be vowed to celibacy merely because in the fortune of settlement and residence there were not enough women of his kind to go around; so, in the first two classes under consideration, they stooped to those below; in our third class there was nothing below, and besides the same inequality of numbers was less in evidence and, where absent, the degraded standard of morals introduced certain sexual modifications or ameliorations. The foreigner during his first and second generations in a new environment was, by the necessity of language and the ties of religion, practically restricted to his own, and here again the disparity of the sexes was somewhat less in evidence; besides, his intrusion into the Pioneer life was so petty as hardly to influence the whole.

It is, therefore, the effect upon marriage among the real Pioneers, those upon whom was laid the burden of extending the metes and bounds of civilization, that must be considered if there is to be an understanding of western life in its formative days. In order to furnish the necessary material for reaching a conclusion I shall append herewith a brief table drawn from the population figures for 1840, 1850, and 1860, showing the numerical relation which the sexes bore to each other in the entire country, in the special sources of supply, and in the Pioneer area itself. This will show that the Pioneer had other problems to solve than those which dealt wholly either with economic

## Pioneer Foundations

destruction or construction. It reveals at a glance that general disparity of the sexes which was one of the striking features of our whole early history. This inequality in numbers is not dealt with beyond our period because that lies outside the purview of this study; but its existence is one of the striking features of American life which any interested student may easily verify to his own profit.

### WHITE INHABITANTS OF THE PIONEER REGION BY STATES AND SEX

	1840		1850		1860	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Kentucky	305,323	284,930	392,804	368,609	474,193	445,291
Tennessee	325,434	315,193	382,235	374,601	422,779	403,943
Ohio	775,360	726,762	1,004,117	950,933	1,171,698	1,131,110
Indiana	352,773	325,925	506,178	470,976	693,348	645,291
Illinois	255,235	217,019	445,544	400,490	898,941	805,350
Missouri	173,470	150,418	312,987	279,017	563,131	500,358
Michigan	113,395	98,165	208,465	186,606	388,006	348,136
Iowa	24,256	18,668	100,887	90,994	353,900	319,879
Wisconsin	18,757	11,992	164,351	140,405	406,309	367,384
Minnesota			3,695	2,443	92,677	78,550
Totals	2,344,003	2,149,072	3,521,582	3,265,074	5,465,030	5,075,292
Male Excess	194,931		256,508		389,738	

### THE LARGE EFFECTS OF SUCH MIXTURES

WHEN in the first type of settlers to which in spite of a false popular sentiment and feeling I have chosen to call classes, this marked disparity of the male over the female made it impossible to follow the instinct for like to mate with like, it was inevitable that there should follow a decline in the standard so that some of the original and useful men would marry in what the social conventions of nearly all times would call beneath them. Their land

## The Large Effects of Such Mixtures

of Nod was not some far country but was the result of a peaceful penetration which spread all about them. They would pick there, not from their theoretical point of view, or from physical or romantic inclination, the best, but the available, instinctive second choices.

After the analysis I have made of these classes, it will not be necessary greatly to enlarge upon the meaning of the policy thus forced upon such men. The women chosen would be entirely respectable; they would tend to be industrious, though never quite sure of themselves; generally speaking, their families would be looking up rather than down, but they would lack the intellectual and moral vigor needed and expected in the wives and mothers of creative men. They would seldom have in them the potencies of improvement. Now and then a daughter would develop higher qualities and thus take and hold with credit her proper place in the social scheme. But even here there was constant though inevitable recurrence to type, and in perhaps the majority of cases there would be the gradual descent that the very necessity of the experiment had prefigured, so that the succeeding generations would pass through a process of blood dilution with such far-reaching effects that instead of raising the second class it would abase the first.

This process of female transfer had many ramifications. The women thus exalted had to be replaced somewhere down the line. In marriage the universal tendency of men and women is to seek the best available—a tendency especially emphasized by women when they command so

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much of a premium that their range of choice is enlarged. The best man in this second class, balked of satisfaction, must go still further down the line and content himself with a second or third best. In the descent, the process leads on until even the despised and almost useless women find their way to a nominal station so far above their real merit that failure both in themselves and their descendants is inevitable. Thus it is that the so-called doctrine of natural selection works when applied to mankind under circumstances that make its logical development impossible, and it is thus that the thinning of blood went on in the Pioneer life, and as it must proceed in any other when the number of males so predominates over the females.

### *THE DIFFICULTY OF ADJUSTING THE CONDITIONS*

Nor could this balance be redressed by drawing a supply of women from districts or areas where they were redundant. At the time this great human experiment of settlement was under way, there were many thousands of women in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and other old communities, as well as in Europe, who from every logical or human point of view (origin, character, ability, energy, and industry) would have fitted into this new and virile life. But neither these widely separated communities, nor their respective individuals, knew anything of each other, or had any reciprocal interests, such older settlements not being even serious contributing elements to the younger. It is not in the nature of men and women, any more than it is in the animal creation, to seek mates afar off how-

## The Difficulty of Adjusting the Conditions

ever superior or attractive they are or may seem to be; as marriage, considered from the large point of view, proceeds along the lines of least resistance, there was no successful quest for those fish in the sea which are proverbially as good as any that have been caught because the two parties could not exploit the same waters. So, the Massachusetts spinster had to pass husbandless through life while the Pioneer bachelor, being driven somewhere or anywhere by his nature, had to take what wife he could get without regard to fitness for the larger work society had in store for him, and thus to forego that individual congeniality for either party to a life contract of such consummate importance.

The same general conclusion applied to the old communities which really contributed to the peopling of the West. Except for periods, never lasting over two decennial census takings, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina, the principal parent districts, always had more men than women so that the few of the latter who would go out as wives to affianced husbands would be more than balanced by those who, born in the Pioneer area, returned to take up their life work in the district of origin — a fact which accounted, in considerable measure, for the moving-back tendency. How difficult it was to shift this balance and, as emphasizing the far-reaching effects that constantly made themselves felt, stands the fact that of 807 counties, in the nine States under consideration, organized and making returns of their population in 1860, only in three in Kentucky, eleven in Ten-



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nessee, six in Ohio, and one in Iowa, or twenty-one in all, did the females outnumber the males and in all these the total excess was less than two thousand. As the disparity of males in the same area in 1860 was 389,738 out of an excess of 681,462 for the entire country, the difficulties inherent in such a marked difference in sex numbers are easy to understand as is the fact that the effects upon population and social conditions were not only fundamental from a material point of view but that they cut deeply into life at many points and angles — those relating to sexual morals not being the least significant or important.

As a result of these conditions, a decline in intellectual virility of usefulness in many of the families of the natural leaders in this life was early apparent, even when derived from a stock vigorous, to all outward appearance, on both sides. As a rule, such families retain the original character without serious deterioration through one or two generations before the levelling or degenerative effect of a sudden and, in many cases, an abnormal prosperity can make itself seriously felt; but in a considerable proportion even of those having the most enterprise and ability practically every child was a failure; the watering-down process had been fatal; the breed had been debased. In a far greater number of cases than would have seemed possible, this accounts for the dropping out from the activities of life of the immediate descendants of the hardy Pioneers whose initiative had done so much to form new commonwealths and to create a wholesome society. There is no danger of over-emphasis on this point because exaggeration of the

## The Difficulty of Adjusting the Conditions

influence of weak female stamina upon such a life is next to impossible. It presents so strong a contrast to the opposite experience of New England, or Virginia, as to put it among the striking facts of our national life and development.



# GREATNESS A RELATIVE TERM



## NO LEADERS FROM THE OUTSIDE

ONE of the most intelligent and really discriminating English critics of colonial life was John E. Doyle, whose life was given to its study. His earliest work was *The British Colonies in America* written as a thesis for his degree. This was followed by a series of comprehensive volumes in which he investigated early conditions with a thoroughness that did credit both to his industry and his conceptions of the inner philosophy of English settlement on the American continent. Never coming down in point of time to those detestable quarrels which in the middle of the eighteenth century reflected discredit upon both the mother and the children, he was able to avoid the pettiness incident to the passions and prejudices which, until recent years, made almost useless the histories written either here or in England of a time when narrowness and greed on the one side and unnatural truculence on the other finally precipitated that struggle for independence often dignified by the name of Revolution.

Nothing, in the admirable work done by a writer too little known or studied, deals with the question which I have chosen for treatment, but in directing attention to his wide-embracing contributions to American history I am impelled to quote one of his large generalizations as the text for this chapter in which I shall presume to deal with the slow development of outstanding leadership or

## Pioneer Foundations

ability in that Pioneer region which gourd-like has attained such a position of importance in both population and material development as to excite in the minds of many an impatience with the slow growth of intellectual greatness. In this matter I shall limit my observations to the century ending with 1870 and in place to the definite Pioneer region.

In *The Middle Colonies* (page 480) he enunciated as a conclusion: "Everywhere among the colonies the life of the community is far more interesting than the life of any man in it. There is no disparagement in this. It is rather praise to say that a community is better and stronger than its best and strongest man. For that means that a community has, in its institutions, its faith, and its corporate morality, guarantees for its well-being of which it cannot be robbed by chance."

This theory may have, as its foil, the sentiment from Ralph Waldo Emerson's essay on "Fate" in which that most observant of writers who, at a later day saw his countrymen in so many districts and from so many angles, sums up his conclusions, not about the mass but about the minute neighborhoods everywhere to be seen. "In each town", he says, "there is some man who is, in his brain and performance, an explanation of the tillage, production, factories, banks, churches, ways of living and society of that town. If you do not chance to meet him, all that you will see will leave you a little puzzled: if you see him, it will become plain."

Other historic colonies have had leaders assigned to them

## No Leaders From the Outside

by some suzerain or conquering power — a soldier, a satrap, a king, or a despot. Sometimes an Archbishop, chosen by a Pope, has enforced the latter's policy and ideas upon a people with no possible regard to their own desires or interests. Under all these methods, leaders have been chosen from the top and assigned without regard to their acceptability to the governed.

America was never the victim of that system save by the Spaniard and the Frenchman, and in both instances with that premonition of certain failure which early drove them forever from the continent. Among the English the same suspicion of interference (mild though it might be) with local government precipitated confusion and finally brought about the loss of the greatest potential colonial possession known to history. When the United States came to manage its own dependencies, it had learned its lesson. In imitation of earlier methods, it sent out governors, secretaries, and judges; but they were marvels of impotence, subjected at every turn to a watchfulness that brooked no assumption of power, and to oversight and control by small bodies chosen by the people themselves, every member as jealous for the asserted rights of himself and his constituents as it is possible for men with small single powers to be.

So, the governor seldom became a real head and never in any case where he had not shown his sympathy with his people by becoming, like them, a permanent settler taking as a citizen the humble place that did not interfere with his position as a governor. Such a man could not guide the new community over which he was nominally



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set; he never became more than an agent carrying out policies made for him : each rigidly fenced in by precedent. In all our history, only three such men, William Henry Harrison in Indiana, Edward Coles in Illinois, and Lewis Cass in Michigan were able, in their new surroundings, to carve out independent careers for themselves. A good many others have had aspirations, but their characters — harmonizing with their limited power and the indisposition of really strong men to accept such places — have combined to leave them behind in the race for honors. In some cases governors, after leaving their temporary positions, have returned to their original homes and have either retired from politics or have begun anew as the seekers for places of smaller nominal dignity.

### *THE DEVELOPMENT OF LEADERSHIP FOR THEMSELVES*

HAVING no outside guidance, the Pioneer was forced to find or develop leaders for himself; this could only be done in his own way. Even outside the official designations, few men migrated after they had attained position in the States or communities of origin, and only a small proportion carried into the wilderness or the prairie anything resembling inherited position. In a few instances such young men went from Virginia or North Carolina but most of them were gleaners — seldom able to develop or maintain anything resembling leadership. No great respect for names survived the process of removal from an old community into the rude surroundings of a new one. The demands which the conditions made were less likely to

## Development of Leadership for Themselves

be met by the occasional cadet sent out from families fairly prominent or well-to-do, than by the rigorous new stock of the same blood drawn from everywhere by the spirit of adventure and the opportunities afforded for making places of their own. The origins were the same and all had like qualities; but the new race of Pioneers was more likely to be drawn from the aspiring than from those already successful. They were more often the product of community and united spirit than of recognized families. When it came to dealing with trees and Indians, individuals counted for so little that time was necessary in every neighborhood to discover and develop the needed leaders.\*

This was true, whether the social unit was the smallest or when it became sufficiently important to organize the larger political, religious, or educational center. Leadership was not a question of formal vote: it was asserted or assumed from a natural, not an artificial, selection. No question could arise about precedence in settling, or from

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\* The west was neither discovered, won, nor settled by any single man. No keen-eyed statesman planned the movement, nor was it carried out by any great military leader; it was the work of a whole people, of whom each man was impelled mainly by sheer love of adventure; it was the outcome of the ceaseless strivings of all the dauntless, restless backwoods folk to win homes for their descendants and to each penetrate deeper than his neighbors into the remote forest hunting-grounds where the perilous pleasures of the chase and of war could be best enjoyed. We owe the conquest of the west to all the backwoodsmen, not to any solitary individual among them; where all alike were strong and daring there was no chance for any single man to rise to unquestioned preëminence.—Theodore Roosevelt's *The Winning of the West* (Standard Library Edition), Vol. I, pp. 145, 146.

## Pioneer Foundations

the place of origin, or as the result of religious affiliations, and until later even supposed or known political opinions did not come into account. The existing parties, in the places of departure, did not survive with sufficient vigor to hold their adherents in their new environment.

Federal and Republican even as party names did not really cross the Alleghenies and so meant almost nothing to the earliest Pioneer who took time only to assure himself that the imported division into parties would invite danger. Until the number became sufficient to organize the whole into a force strong enough to insure protection, or until the offices became sufficiently lucrative either in power or pay to appeal to the ambitious, coöperation was an absolute necessity. Thus, in the earliest neighborhoods with their scant populations leadership was little affected by any of those artificial influences which are so strong in a highly-organized life, and often tend to show the trees while hiding the forest.

### THE UNPAID WORK OF A PIONEER COMMUNITY

As DEVELOPMENT proceeded, the nominal leader, the officeholder, was seldom credited by the community with initiative. The man with this gift was too original, too useful, both to himself and to all, to be wasted upon formal or official work. The combined leadership within a county, for instance, would seek out the man best qualified for treasurer, recorder of deeds, or commissioner; but he seldom belonged to the independent and successful type of which they themselves were the representatives.

## The Unpaid Work of a Pioneer Community

The competition for these offices was always sharp. They were sought with a persistency which, never relaxed, would have produced far ampler return to the individual if it had been applied to ordinary industrial pursuits. These places were supposed to be easy, and from the nature of the aspirants they provided the only way by which they could hope to break the tether of commonplace which confined them. The result was often pathetic; the spectacle of men of some fair measure of ability limited in their usefulness to themselves and the community by the narrow restrictions of petty offices. It was only the business of the leading men to insure the choice of the best from those who offered themselves so freely : nothing could induce them to take such places for themselves.

The participation of the really enterprising elements was in strictly local duties, having to do with schools, roads, or churches — places with recognized position and influence, but without emolument. In no life known to recent times, settled or simple, has so large a proportion of the constructive work of the community been done by consent as in that of the American Pioneer; and certainly nowhere else, not even in modern England, has so large a measure of this activity been in the hands of the men who had no idea of using it for any purpose other than the promotion of the common good. And yet, outside this personal participation these men were the influential agents in the important work of the county, the State, and the nation, and in shaping those policies which insured the larger public results. They kept a pretty close watch upon

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party politics and upon the choice of delegates, legislators, governors, and the administrators of educational or charitable methods or institutions.

Thus, in all the agencies that affected the larger issues, Pioneer conditions tended, perhaps, to sift men more effectually than in almost any other section of American society of the time. Pretension, solemnity, incompetence, lack of originality, selfishness, or failure to see opportunity or take advantage of it, were soon recognized. If, for a time, men with these negative or sinister qualities came to the front, their triumph was short-lived.

The vicarious sacrifice made by creative and original minds in the narrow sphere thus open was the tribute paid in certain periods to the absence of large opportunity. The need was constant for all the initiative available, and in the shifting conditions incident to the times it required a united effort to maintain the progress of the community. If there was shirking anywhere the burden of labor and responsibility thrown upon the remainder was so increased that the death or removal of one or two men from a neighborhood often meant a serious decline which was seldom arrested until new blood came to the rescue. Individuality was so vital, the absence of central authority so striking, that any intermission of effort was certain to produce a deterioration that was soon noticed.

Every neighborhood was dependent upon its own local talent, and yet was so obviously a competitor with every other within its range that public spirit to be effective had to be maintained along the whole line. It was curious

## The Extent of the Popular Contribution

to see how soon a backward neighborhood lost its standing. The better elements began to leave; the prices of land, otherwise as good as the best, declined; improvements ran down; the most desirable newcomers passed by on the other side; schools could not command even the average teachers; the better doctors moved to neighborhoods more progressive though perhaps less inherently attractive; and the efficient artisan found more congenial employment somewhere else.

Sometimes this process would apply to an entire township, not seldom to the quarter or the half of a county. Many such places had to be entirely reconstructed—a process only possible, in a general way, when the influx of new population, especially after the Civil War, caused an overflow of the strong into these neglected parts and the ejection of the weak. A sluggish public spirit was the worst enemy a new settlement could have. It was only in those counties or districts in which this condition was absent that local leadership could maintain itself in this formative life. The effect was to make every active and intelligent man sensitive to his surroundings, and to produce a rivalry down among the units of which a given county or groups of communities were composed.

### THE EXTENT OF THE POPULAR CONTRIBUTION

THIS watchfulness so promoted the study of the common good that, in spite of the hardship and the absence of opportunity or large issues, the proportion of really useful men and women to the whole was probably greater during

## Pioneer Foundations

the whole period than that seen either before or since in rural life, or than is possible in the urban era through which the world is passing. This is especially true when account is taken of the abnormal contribution made by the farm to the workshop, the railroad, and the larger development that proceeded in districts remote from the places where these active minds had been born and started on the strange activities for which they had a natural gift.

While this work was not done in a corner it was hidden from general view in roads or schoolhouses, in the foundation and care of cemeteries, in religious activities, in attention to the sick or the dying, in devotion to unselfish considerations which, in other or more pretentious fields, would have been miscalled charitable in that sense of this word implying poverty or helplessness in the recipients of such attention. No public or general recognition was either possible or thought of. It was merely the day of small things; not only were its duties parochial, but it meant the making of a parish where none was before. No large rewards were expected because they did not exist; and yet the work, small though it might seem, was never less than creative. It required minds with originality to do it at all. There was less question of recognition because those who, down the line, were its beneficiaries, took everything, as humanity is prone to do with all initiative, as a matter of course. It was to be done and to these creators of the things possible for them it was not given to reason why.

The duty to make this almost boundless Upper Missis-

## The Extent of the Popular Contribution

Mississippi Valley a fitting place for human beings demanded the united effort of all the people then living upon it. When the inertness, the indifference, the ignorance, and the incompetence of the mass were taken into account, and when to these were added the incubus of the bad and the resistance of the useless, the hardness of the task can be appreciated even if its value is not always fully appraised. Petty as these opportunities seemed, they were always producing a crisis of some kind, just as the fireman's battalion must put out the small fire when there is no other. In both cases, the circle extended further and further and connected itself, when well done, with a still broader service to society. There was the consciousness that the best were at the service of all : the work was not left to the self-seeking, the corruptionist, the interested, or the intriguer.

Each generation took up the tasks of its predecessors; so that results always lapped over. There was no hiatus. Each either knew his lesson intuitively or he learned it. If these men looked out upon narrow horizons, their sight was at least clear. They did not know that they were building upon historic facts and models; and yet, what they did was based upon their religion though even more deeply imbedded in the traditions of their race and their own inherited qualities. They passed on the torch of human experience, keeping it always alight, and that without even so much as an attempt to recognize what they were doing. Their surroundings were apparently narrow, but their vision was always of the larger human outlook.



## Pioneer Foundations

At each lengthening step they could see an improvement in men and methods, in graciousness and morals. There was a determination to make things better, not alone in material conveniences for those who came after them, but in matters of that spirit which is the one quality that really makes men.\*

They did not aspire to the production of what is known as great men; they were rather more desirous of assurance that out of the new and raw conditions that lay about them Americans should lay the foundations for becoming a really great and commanding people. They somehow felt that the real history of mankind had been written in an all-round individuality which, having made beginnings possible, corrected abuses, promoted progress and perpetuated itself, not through the medium of the occasional hero or great man but in widely distributed captains of tens and captains of hundreds, all sufficiently instructed to develop their competence for the work that lay immediately about them and to reveal the capacity for a larger direction when the day of need should arrive.

### THE DISCIPLINE OF POWER

ACCORDING to the theories behind republican ideas and institutions, of which government was merely a sign, as

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\* If we could obtain an ultimate analysis of what is at work in the world about us, shaping the minds and destinies of mankind, we would, doubtless, find there the deeds of all the vanished units of our race, each having a share, great or small, in the human activity of the present moment. — N. S. Shaler's *The Individual*, p. 78.

## The Discipline of Power

authority becomes necessary men so grow that it can be wielded to the advantage and with the consent of all. Whatever may be the general idea, whether in a condition of tyranny, or in a state of freedom, or whatever outward form executive power may take, there is no assured progress either in the beginning or along the line except under a collective leadership based upon real consent without which no stable government has existed or ever will exist — strong, well-balanced, working unconsciously as a body, without that pretension which tends to break down obedience and respect, not afraid to assume responsibility, and yet willing to concede that it must lie at the foundation of human government.

No formula prescribing government of the people, by the people, for the people, is necessary because it is in reality as old as human freedom. The idea existed and the ideal was in force thousands of years before Thomas Cooper, or Daniel Webster, or Abraham Lincoln (all of whom have been credited with the verbal expression of the conclusions) were born, or before the forms of government in their minds were thought of. They were newly worked out in the isolation of the wilderness and the prairie following their practical operation since the days of Magna Charta, down through the settlements in Virginia, New York, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and every American colony, English or French. However much the form might change the thing was there : in the long run and everywhere government was little more than anarchy. Out of this idea has come all authority.

## Pioneer Foundations

The reason that this life seems narrow, that the names of its men and women do not illumine history's pages is not their fault but that of their environment and times in spite of creative quality. Nothing stood before them that the world is accustomed to recognize as great. They had to go on laying foundations; in making them they encountered the same jealousies, weaknesses, and pettinesses, that the loftiest characters have had to meet in all civilizations. In each case, the leaders, whatever their rank or achievements, or whoever they were, did the same things : neither seriously differed from the other, nor did the task of one seriously diverge from that of the other; the distinction was in degree not in kind. The world is surprised, now and then, to find that some man comes to the front just when and where he is needed : yet there ought not to be any astonishment. The ability, courage, and adaptability shown by a commanding character, a Washington, a Franklin, a Jefferson, a Hamilton, a Jackson, a Lincoln, a Cleveland, or a Roosevelt, are not accidental. They have been drawn from the reservoirs where heredity and character had stored them against the time of use and necessity. These emerge in the descendant because he comes into a time when his qualities are needed; but, as these qualities were not accidental, they could not have developed if they had not been there.

In no case in all history, however surprising its presence, has this gift come out of origins that were mean or contemptible, or even unexpected if all the mysteries entering into character could be known and fathomed. The

## The Discipline of Power

same is true of the other men, who coming to great power only to curse and betray mankind — a Cleon, a Caligula, a Nero, a Charles the First, or a Benedict Arnold. No more than the others, were these the products of blind chance. In every case the qualities, either good or bad, were inherent and opportunity only waited in the one case as in the other by the exercise of her supreme patience to bring them out.\*

Applying these doctrines which, though often forgotten, do not rise above the rank of truisms, to the people under study, we have to take into account the narrow, hard physical surroundings, the problems to be solved — no less essential to human progress than for Caesar to conquer Gaul or Britain, or for Washington to assert and defend the imperiled freedom of a struggling people. We must take into account the divergent human elements to be dealt with, the end that a wise destiny had fixed, the good of coming generations in every part of the world. Thus it is given us to understand why these people of large parts,

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\* It is likely that in every thousand persons there is at least one who is far above the average in natural capacity, but the seed which is in him dies for want of cultivation. It has never had any stimulus to grow, or any field in which to blossom and produce fruit. Here is a great reservoir or treasure-house of human intelligence out of which new waters may flow and cover the earth. If, at any time, the great men of the world should die out, and originality or genius appear to suffer a partial eclipse, there is boundless hope in the multitude of intelligence for future generations. They may bring gifts to men such as the world has never received before. They may begin at a higher point and yet take with them all the results of the past. — From Dr. B. Jowett's *Introduction to Plato's Symposium*.

## Pioneer Foundations

many-sided, enterprising and adventurous, were pushed out into the waste places in order that they might apply their gifts of mind and body to the task that they saw clearly, however imperfectly they might understand its remoter meanings.

We can now see how they were to apply a mental training, often looked upon as rude, to the great and varied tasks that lay before them; and it is also possible to see how the qualities inherent in them could be carried down in solution and applied in the most difficult times through which mankind has had to pass. It shows why only a little patience was required for peoples like those who started, as little more than grains of mustard-seed in Virginia and Massachusetts Bay, to come finally to their own and that with a suddenness little less than bewildering. It might well become us, their descendants, the inheritors of their great labors, if we should recognize the potent fact that they could not do their work there in the Great Taskmaster's eye and still live in the atmosphere of poetry and romance—the absence of which we are so prone both to exaggerate and to lament.\*

### AND YET THERE WAS REAL LEADERSHIP

IF GREATNESS may be defined as the will and power to perform at the right time what nobody else either thinks

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\* Democracy is sometimes eminently creative; but it is on condition that out of it are evolved conservative and aristocratic institutions which prevent the indefinite prolongation of the revolutionary fever.—Ernest Renan's *Lectures on the Influence of the Institutions, Thought and Culture of Rome*, p. 159.

## And Yet There Was Real Leadership

of or can do, then this quality was never absent from the Pioneer in any one of the thousands of permanent neighborhoods created by him out of nothing. They did not make themselves; so that the man, however humble outwardly, who first discovered the best place for a grist or saw mill, a ford, a ferry, or a farm, or saw in his mind's eye what could be collected round about them, was as truly a leader as if, on a larger scale, he had set a battle line or rendered a court decision. As this work had never been done, as it was useful and necessary, as he made a beginning that was neither more nor less than a precedent, so he must have credit for it whether or not chronicle and history record it.

As one generation cannot do the work that belongs to another, a uniform standard of achievement cannot be set up; because one set of men finds and makes farms and homes and grows crops, while another builds elevators to store the grain produced or railroads or ships to carry it to market, the processes are the same even if, in either case, the first settler dies in his tracks or moves on and is forgotten. Most of these men derived, either directly or remotely, from ancestors who had left fairly settled, more agreeable surroundings in order to enter upon this task of creating in the heart of the wilderness something where nothing had existed before. Taking advantage of the few opportunities that presented themselves they had their own intellectual achievements.

It was in no respect a small thing for any human mind to understand, or even to think that it understood, the

## Pioneer Foundations

mysterious theology of that time. In neither case was it an achievement for fools or weaklings. Once realizing that the mental powers existed for this serious purpose it ought not to be difficult to see that the same functions might as easily comprehend in course of time the simple ideas that enter into Spiritualism, or Christian Science, or woman suffrage, or the still more primitive impulses of the socialist, the anarchist, or the other agitators who profess no creed but that of destroying whatever may have been built up, however great the effort or mind necessary to create it, or however much time, labor, or thought its accumulation may have involved.

If these people had the capacity to gain at least some small appreciation of Job (one of the most recondite characters in literature) it is not likely that their intellects would have been balked in trying to comprehend *David Harum*. It is easy to imagine that if they had had occasion to make the acquaintance of "Arthur Dimmesdale", he would have reflected himself back upon their minds much more clearly than upon those of their successors of the present day who, while priding themselves upon their culture and the range of their mental powers and interests, do not know much about any other human nature than that found in their own narrow fields. It would be fair to concede that "Daisy Miller", one of the few fictive creations illustrative of the American genius, would have been beyond their power of understanding because they could not have been induced to think that such a type of young woman either existed or was possible. It is quite

## And Yet There Was Real Leadership

enough to ask of any one generation that it shall fairly comprehend the women it knows without requiring that it shall anticipate the development of female freaks of a new genus.

If it be assumed that there was little eloquence, no poetry, no commanding preacher or lawyer, no creative physician or teacher, it might be fair to ask how large is the contribution of these, even in the whole country, three-quarters of a century later. And yet, out of these rude conditions, existing within the Pioneer area, there came and passed within less than three generations the great figures of Jackson, Clay, Lincoln, Douglas, and Grant — the five men to whom in two almost overmastering emergencies, separated by the distance of a generation, it was given to save the Union — to say nothing of the host of useful, outstanding figures who worked with them in every State in this Pioneer region. Neither these men, drawn from the top to which they rose naturally and because they were needed and not by accident or by hollow demagogic appeals to an excited populace, nor the almost infinite number who, unknown and unnamed, have been indicated herein as developing in every neighborhood were not made, as is often thought, merely by hardship or exposure, or physical labor. They did not have to be made by anything. They simply were. They existed. They had in them qualities that came out, and being in them would have been developed whether they finished their formal education with a blue-covered spelling-book in a log schoolhouse, or in the most exalted college of all time.



## Pioneer Foundations

In any case, as neither the men studied as prototypes or examples, nor the great army of associates and followers who worked with them, were the products of slums, degradation, or poverty, so they had nothing to do but to act naturally and thus to bring out what was in them. Valuable as is the so-called higher education, it is not wise to fall down and worship it, or to treat it as a crutch instead of the staff that it should be. It is especially vital to recognize that in a new country native mental vigor has a saving grace not recognized at its value and seldom employed to its full bent in the more sophisticated times.

Native ability was seldom hedged about by the titles or offices again so magnified among men. It thus had ample opportunity to assert itself, without having to overcome hampering qualifications. The society was so new that it was a necessity to develop a leader from the material at hand. It involved the power to devise and direct work as well as the willingness to do it, however rough it might be. The man who laid out roads had also to help make them. If a schoolhouse had been built, somebody was expected to find the teacher, put him at his task, and then give him the necessary moral support.

In this way perhaps twenty men would find both training and opportunity, small though they might seem, in the organization and management of the work of a county; whereas, in an old community governed by routine, everything would run by momentum. Thus, talents and gifts acquired an experience which under ordinary circumstances and conditions might lie dormant — as the peasant mind

## Their Dependence Upon Themselves

is wont to do in a highly centralized society. It mattered not that the scene was remote or the work obscure : the man was given an insight into something outside his own narrow daily needs and made into a public servant with the consequent spirit and sense of responsibility. He might not have much of the thing called education, but he was sought out as having sufficient of this acquirement to learn his duty and then do it, more especially to be recognized as the possessor of a measure of common sense that marked him for leadership among his neighbors. He thus became the ever-ready emergency man on the periphery of civilization. He no more could afford to be caught napping than the sentry at his post. Nevertheless, he was recognized as leader just as much as if he had been voted to the head of a company in time of war. However lonely this man and his wife might become, however heavy the burden might be, they stood there giving unselfish service to God and man. Human experience in all its various manifestations shows that men do not know, even for themselves, what they can do until they have been tried. What the Pioneer life did was to give them their chance on a new testing ground.\*

### THEIR DEPENDENCE UPON THEMSELVES

A QUALITY seen nowhere else in such a high degree was the reliance of these people upon themselves. Men who

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\* If we judge men by outward performance only, we may often be greatly mistaken in our estimates; potentiality is wider than actuality; what a man does is never a certain or extreme criterion of what he may do. — Grant Allen's *Charles Darwin*, p. 27.

## Pioneer Foundations

were rich, highly educated, or successful, were satisfied and so did not bury themselves in the wilderness nor settle upon a bleak prairie. There was little in the Pioneer life to attract a college or academy graduate: he could find in more settled surroundings a better, more highly competitive market for his abilities and training. It is almost impossible to discover in the history of any State or community in this area a man who had reached real recognition in the place of birth or early residence. It was the sons of such men, mainly the younger, who pushed out into districts where all were engaged in that individual effort necessary to conquer opportunity. Whatever legislators, preachers, doctors, or judges these people had, either came to make their own way or were developed in the air of the surroundings in which they were born. Boone, Robertson, George Rogers Clark, Putnam, Steuben, Jackson, Clay, Benton, Cass, Chase, Douglas, Trumbull, Grimes, Thurman, Doolittle, are examples of those who came from the outside, generally as poor as the traditional church mouse; while the Blairs, Hendrickses, Shermans, Lincolns, Corwins, McDonalds, Millers, Breckinridges, and Crittendens, as types of thousands of others, grew up and made their way on the soil conquered by their fathers.

In the world's history there has never been a spot of earth where so little of the artificial was found as in the Pioneer area, represented by the ten States, under study. There was seldom a clergyman or lawyer who, following the earlier custom in Virginia, New England, or the Middle States, either could or would teach the ambitious boys as

## Their Dependence Upon Themselves

they came along Latin, or mathematics, or the natural sciences. There were still fewer opportunities to get this help from the trained teachers of the day because their energies were mortgaged to the small private academies which they might found now and then or to the rude common schools.

Outside the much-famed three R's, whose effectiveness was always over-estimated, boys could only get, with much delay and difficulty, such knowledge as they might pick up. They either had to hammer it out on the anvil of their own minds in the face of hesitation, difficulties, almost despair, or, while seeing their chances disappear, to go without it, merely trusting to circumstances, almost to chance, to make up in later life some of the leeway thus lost without fault of their own. How severe these handicaps were can only be understood by those who had to see or meet them. These boys and girls, with keen, active minds, wholesome ambitions, and aspirations that nobody outside themselves either knew or appreciated, all encased in sound bodies, were not ignorant of the fact that in other parts of their own country even in the earlier settled zones of the Pioneer area other boys and girls, no better born or brighter than themselves, were enjoying privileges that gave them advantages of a commanding order.

The sad feature was that these ardent young persons instinctively knew and felt with the utmost keenness the unfairness of the competitions to which they had to submit when it came their turn to go out into the great world. They found it impossible to germinate ideas in the

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soil baked by an intellectual aridity that encircled them like the air they breathed. It was this that made the Pioneer life really hard. The toil for an insignificant return, the struggle to make ends meet, the absence of markets, even the loneliness, were as nothing compared with knowledge of the fact that in the outlying world there were other people enjoying, in at least some small measure, a mental outlook with a chance to make all-round human beings of themselves; to know that economic science meant something more than the mechanical growing of more corn or the raising of more animals; that new Biblical interpretations were in the air; that somewhere medical service was getting away from the ideas and methods of Dr. Sangrado; that legal principles were under discussion by men fitted to present or decide them with a high order of intelligence; that there was something in politics higher than the message of some governor who could not rise above the limitations of the provincial mind, or than the utterance of a senator or other legislator who deemed his duty done when he talked down to what he thought the rural mind wanted and could comprehend.

### *HOW THEY SAW THEIR OWN PERILS*

LIKE all other peoples or individuals blessed with intuitive wisdom these Pioneers saw far beyond the things of mere physical sense. None knew better the extent of the sacrifice they were making in order to obey the creative instinct. They were often put down as dullards who did not see their own faults or the deficiencies of the life in

## How They Saw Their Own Perils

which they were actors. And yet, it has long been common to those living in old communities to feel or affect surprise when they found themselves brought into contact with men and women little above the rank of frontiersmen, that they had an inherent culture or a capacity for it — often beyond the claims of the higher education and scholarship. This quality of gentleness was no more universal in them than in the city or the show places : boors are not the necessary product of a hard outer environment; but, like every other human manifestation they develop from the inner being into outward form. Illustration is thus afforded anew of the futility of generalizations about types or classes based upon place of birth, surroundings, or even the company that they seem to keep. Innate courtesy like native ability will come out at the first opportunity, just as ineradicable vulgarity must find its outlet — in spite of the adage, fine feathers do not always make fine birds.

This recognition of drawbacks and deficiencies was not confined to the young — those hopeful, aspiring boys and girls who as a class could scarcely believe that their hopes would ripen into realities. They, indeed, suffered most because circumstances were constantly opening up to them new vistas or revealing opportunities remote from them. They went on with patience and persistence, doing their best, emerging from primitive religious surroundings, getting whatever they could from educational facilities, small though they both seemed to be, and coming out as useful, uncomplaining citizens who never forgot either their duties or the ideals whose possession had made their type so

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powerful. They buried their own aspirations in the unfathomable sea of common duties. Lack of a real outlook did not produce despair; unable to do what they would, they proceeded to do what they could.

It was the older generation, the real Pioneers, going in succession year after year into new scenes who suffered most. They knew that the larger mental opportunity could never overtake them, that although they were material creators they could not hope, individually, to do more than the small work that lay about them. They saw that without the new transportation facilities which would connect them with the outer world, they could not hope for anything more than that rude physical comfort to which they had never been strangers. Improvement in education, the provision of broader religious privileges, better houses and agriculture, a larger relation to politics, everything that makes for an all-round civilization, were hindered by the isolation which, like their fathers, they had sought and still loved; they knew that nothing could bring them relief except closer relations with the outside world for which, while knowing so little of it, they instinctively pined. They saw, more and more that they must escape from the grip of that idea of revolution, of violent change, which since 1765 had held all Americans as in a vise. There came a time in our history as a country when it was recognized that the process of tearing down was almost finished, and that construction as well as a recognition of the fact that a conservatism which should save much that was threatened and an actual restoration were

## How They Saw Their Own Perils

necessary, and that these could only be accomplished by the united effort of all — something that was impossible while they were too far from each other to touch elbows.

So, thoughtful men even though unconsciously and with little outward reason frowned and fretted. They strained at their tethers. In the country at large they saw disunion, both open and veiled, and they feared its intrusion into their own neighborhoods and States. They saw much more clearly than the men in older parts of the Union how with the increase of immigration assimilation was gradually disappearing. They were less bound by narrow party lines. The mechanism of politics and social life was not highly developed and was less cramping to originality than in older parts. So, while outward satisfaction was coupled with an inward fear their introspection told them that if violence came they would have less responsibility for it and more of its burdens than others. They did not furnish the hotbed for sprouting either abolition agitation or pro-slavery arrogance. They realized many years before division came that when it should come they must not only supply their share of armies, that the demands upon them for taxes, food, and all material supplies, would for a time be almost crushing, and that their simple society would be disrupted out of due time.

It was there that the absence of the larger leadership was recognized. It was all very well to have, down at the bottom, thousands of men with the ability and the power to open or shut the doors of each little water-tight compartment of a ship once it was built. But where were



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the men fitted to design, build, improve, or command the ship itself? The production of a high average of neighborhood talent, ambition, comfort, and manhood, even under a mediocre system of training and education, the comparative absence of bad men in power or of those scourges of humanity, the demagogue and the agitator were all very well so far as they went; but a great society cannot be maintained in a progressive condition by merely average achievements and negative virtues.

The inherent drawback to the production in new communities of the great men who are always necessary is that there is nothing for such men to do. The public work is small, narrow, often commonplace, seldom above the simplest routine. The men may be there but opportunity is not so near a neighbor that it can knock every day at their doors. If a road must be made one supervisor looks after it for a part of a township and leaves its continuation to another official, neither coördinating with the other; the school director does his part, but his jurisdiction is limited to the fraction of a fraction of a county; if there is a riot or a theft, the constable can only exercise authority within the township or the sheriff within the county; the State legislator must see to it that his district is not neglected but cannot greatly extend his horizon; the governor, bound to the influences that nominated or elected him as well as by law and his own limitations, can transmit messages or put in his spare time scheming to succeed himself, or to go to the United States Senate; the member of Congress must fight for his own hand mainly by get-

## The Larger Outlook Comes Slowly

ting places for his constituents or public money for his district; while the United States Senator, mainly looking out for himself, voting with his party, is without real power. The local judge hears the average run of cases, charges the jury in the language of precedents and settles nothing because he has nothing new or original to settle.

### *THE LARGER OUTLOOK COMES SLOWLY*

THUS in a comparatively new State where any one of a thousand men is quite as well fitted for its highest offices as are their incumbents, with a like proportion qualified for the places down the line, originality and initiative are persistently discouraged and the great man has no atmosphere in which to breathe or live. Many years may pass before such an emergency will arise that any public official can possibly acquire power by an exhibition of real courage and independence. In the United States Senate, where great issues were under discussion, Douglas brought his powers and his character to bear and in the face of abuse and obloquy and despite a misunderstanding not yet overcome gave his State a real position; but Illinois had been admitted into the Union nearly forty years before and had gone on with the usual crop of chair-fillers. James W. Grimes had been in offices of one grade or another for nearly twenty years before in 1868 he could do a like commanding service for his country and his State — something never possible of repetition until well nigh a half century of its history had passed away.

As the night follows the day, so in general each State

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of the American Union sends out into the political life of the time its unending procession of respectable nobodies with hardly a shade of difference from each other. This monotony is varied, now and then, by the same type of man who has the good fortune to serve for a long time, and thus takes on the nature of a harmless habit. Examples of strong men have already been cited from the States of the Pioneer area, some of which have constantly drawn blanks in the lottery of constructive statesmanship; but, taking one part of the country with another, and each generation in its turn, considering their age, they have, perhaps, contributed quite their share of men who really did something.

If great legal decisions are the test, history will certainly put John Marshall first, not only because his were the earliest, but for the better reason that over a long series of years through interpretation he so made over the Constitution that he was also entitled by ability, length and character of service, to be called a really great outstanding man. When, however, history is written, and the abiding influence of single decisions is compared and measured, probably neither *Marbury vs. Madison* nor the Dartmouth College Case will be cited as in the very first rank of creative judicial acts. Against the advice of the best authorities, defying the experience of all governments, Salmon P. Chase as Secretary of the Treasury had given a government currency the quality of legal tender. It took something more than courage when as Chief Justice some years later in the Legal Tender Cases he reversed his own

## The Larger Outlook Comes Slowly

executive action in a judicial decision that has probably exercised a more profound influence upon the world than any other in the history of American law.

When it becomes necessary to name, within the period under study, a successor for Joseph Story as a commanding Associate Justice of the Supreme Court history finds him in Samuel F. Miller of Iowa; while Thomas M. Cooley of Michigan will in like manner stand out in State courts; and if solid achievements in the literature of the law are sought, it would be difficult to pass over John F. Dillon of another new State. Only add these to the names already listed as recognized additions to the intellectual glories of the country and the showing made is certainly one to strike the imagination. As no emergencies arose in any of these ten States to carry even one individual to the recognition that constitutes greatness, every one of the men in question had to await a national opportunity; but no higher tribute can be paid to the elevating and steadying discipline of the Pioneer life or to the character created by it than the fact that when the time came the men who had grown out of its soil were ready to use their opportunity to give to their country and the world the benefit of their ability, courage, and leadership.

Nor is it on the positive side alone that the Pioneer era may take pride in what its men have done. Like the furnace that consumes its own smoke, the great Central West has burned or buried its own demagogues. If in course of time beyond the limits of our special period it developed in the national field its Pendleton, its Bryan,

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its Cary, its Weaver, its LaFollette, its Allen, *et id omne genus*, it has seen to it that no one of them, by consent from his own people, obtained admittance into the places of great power where harm could be done to the national structure or to society of which it recognized itself to be a component part. If any such men have taken their places as danger signals, they have only attained this position through the appointing power.

### THE DOMINANCE OF POLITICS

IF THE contribution to politics and law was more than worthy of these men it was due to two facts : (1) it was the one branch of intellectual effort that was simplest and lay next to their lives and at least in imagination to their necessities; and (2) it was the one inheritance which was easiest to maintain. The fact should never be overlooked that the tribal instinct of their race lay behind these people. Whatever they seemed to be, in whatever environment they found themselves, whatever term in time or distance in space might separate them from their genesis, whatever differences might seem to exist between them and their remote Saxon and Danish ancestry they were distinctly northern in idea and purpose.

They not only had the same ideas and impulses, the larger outlook available in their shifting environments; but they could not escape the instinctive demand for space in which to turn round, to move and to grow, to breathe as much air as their extremest desires and needs might demand and allow. The hermitic tendency was strong with-

## The Dominance of Politics

in them and the gregarious impulse was naturally weak. Their dogmatic, persistent belief in themselves was as inherent as their instinct for freedom. They did not take naturally to the discipline of the crowd, and as a consequence they were not democratic in the accepted sense of the word and idea under which everybody must be consulted about what anybody may or shall do; they were republican in the highest sense, never granting more power than they could help, but when giving it even under the rudest of systems, entrusting it to the most competent hands available.

These qualities made them from the earliest days the consummate politicians of all time. That the intrigue peculiar to the South did not fit into the conceptions of such a people is shown in the constant fear, never dissipated, about the immigration of any considerable number of people, however worthy, from the southern and eastern countries of Europe, the ineradicable feeling that they could never assimilate ideas so essentially antagonistic. Far more effective than religious dogmas and prejudices, this instinctive idea, the strongest in their natures, lay at the bottom of the opposition to the marvellous spirit of authority in the Catholic Church. It was the undying repulsion that exists between the North and South. In truth, the Pioneer was a land Viking, always resenting control, always looking for something to do, always seeking room in which to sail or to turn.

For many centuries the growth of population and the consequent necessity to delegate authority had made more

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and more insistent demands upon government. In the growth of personal power due to the necessity for keeping order and enforcing discipline amid the rapid material changes incident to modern life, with the enterprise and activity to maintain them, the average man had been so overlooked that he had less authority in the matter of peace and war than in earlier days. In order to redress his balance, association for political purposes came to more than its own. It had won in the period that elapsed between 1603 when with Queen Elizabeth autocratic power in the Western World ended and 1789 when the Constitution of the United States came into being giving every fundamental privilege that society could safely use. Religious toleration, political freedom, and the right of the individual to go where he pleased and to command everywhere the needed protection, were the great principles that had finally asserted themselves after centuries of struggle.

From that time the rest was a matter of detail. The emancipation of the slave, the privilege of voting — itself merely a device or form for recording verdicts, an extension of the old notch in the stick method, or the tally, which had become impracticable — of the policy of combination, whether of labor or capital; the distribution of unused lands to those who would cultivate them; and the other varied forms that police power requires, were settled policies. Sometimes these emerged in one place or country so much earlier than in another that the struggle to get something elsewhere enjoyed became the aim of those who feared they might be excluded. Most of these privileges

## Slow Assimilation of the Finer Qualities

came along the line quite automatically. Where they were delayed the result was an infinite number of agitations and movements, for the most part artificial in aim and management, often inspired for personal ambition by men without power to discriminate—generally by those in a hurry.

Under these circumstances it was not surprising that this universal craze for the thing called politics should overwhelm the Pioneer West, and that its people should deceive themselves into the belief that by some kind of legerdemain the blessings they enjoyed were due to government, when in truth, outside of the already enumerated liberties asserted and gained for them by their ancestors, they practically had nothing which had not been won at one time or another by individual and collective courage and industry. They were thus drawn, along with all their countrymen and most of the world, into this maelstrom with the result that their intellectual efforts first took such a form to the neglect of other and higher activities. This is not the place to examine the remoter effects; but I here account for the loss which the world suffered by reason of this lopsided growth.

### *SLOW ASSIMILATION OF THE FINER QUALITIES*

It is not strange as a fact in human development, it is not even to be lamented, that these people did not produce poems, dramas, novels, philosophic or theological treatises, commanding sermons or orations, great buildings, or any other of the outward evidences of high intellectual powers.



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It would have been abnormal if they had tried to do so. Too much talk is constantly indulged about the backwardness of new peoples or segments of peoples. The creative power is too elusive, too recondite in its origins and processes, too much dependent upon conditions that cannot be made or manipulated, so rare in its coming or in the welcome which whether timid or bold it gets when it appears, to expect it to rise at the waving of some magic wand and to respond merely because a certain number of human beings have assembled themselves upon a given part of the earth's surface. The proportion to survive of the ideas produced at any time, even under the most favoring conditions, is so small that no cause for grief arises if a generation is satisfied to rest fairly contented and thus to give itself over, so far as it can, to the study and enjoyment of what has been done.

Up to the end of the first quarter of the last century, when permanent American settlement was only two hundred years old, Europe was constantly uttering its gibes and reproaches that the American had done nothing for the world in the accepted forms of intellectual achievement. No excuses were taken that formal histories had not been written, forgetful of the fact that there was no history to record; that poems had not come out of a struggling people who had all they could do to live at all; that they should not have so overcome their heredity as to do what England, Germany, France, or Italy seldom did for themselves during the same period in the production of great theologians or commanding lawyers; or that no

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great novel had been wafted back across the ocean when, during the many centuries when this form of literature had been slowly struggling for expression only four or five such commanding works of genius had presented themselves in all Europe.

We cannot, then, reproach the Pioneer era for not pouring upon the world innumerable specimens of literature, or for failing to absorb the thing now called culture, in all its various forms. It is possible, however, to examine with reasonable care the neglect by such a vigorous people of the great creations of genius so long in existence that they had fairly become classic, and thus to determine the lack of that leadership under consideration — a faculty so clearly in evidence in all material matters — as to show their narrowness, their one-sidedness, their failure to get that pleasure and profit from things provided by the world for every inquirer to which they were in fairness entitled. In conceding this fact, it will only emphasize the regret that their deprivations should have been so severe as greatly to affect their descendants and to delay the higher development of the society of which they were a part.

So far as reading was concerned (the fact cannot be over-emphasized or repeated too often) that this was essentially the people of one book and that one whose meaning they could not find out by any search, however sedulous or energetic. There were so many motives back of its study and these were so various in their application to human nature's needs that they often crossed each other's paths. The dominant idea behind the study of the

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Bible was a belief, not alone in its promises, but to the uttermost degree in its words. Both brought profound comfort to weary hearts without of necessity conveying knowledge to the mind. How could the very word of that God, whose ways are past finding out, bring information to fallible men and women? It dealt with human beings; but they were a chosen people who could not do wrong. The poetry of the Bible, however beautiful or crude, made its appeal to minds to whom every word was a Divine promise, not a human lesson. The moment its inspiration in every word and thought ceased to have belief its spell was broken. As its science was not open to question or explanation, it had none of the qualities of a text-book from which knowledge could be obtained. It was only when the time came to treat it critically that its far-reaching effects could be measured — a process which, long forbidden, invited peril to both body and soul.

So, with all its influence, with its almost universal study, enforced by public opinion as well as by inclination and interest, the real influence of the Bible remained what it had been since 1611, spiritual. The time was to arrive when it became the foundation of literature, music, and art, when it was used as a text to permit, even to encourage, dancing and the amusements so strictly forbidden during the centuries that it was the dominating force in the Protestant churches; but what it gained there as a power in the expression of the finer sentiments of men as men, it lost as an unquestioned article of religious faith.

As a consequence these Pioneer people, emphasizing

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"the letter that killeth" and forgetting "the spirit giveth life", devoted their attention to a book which, full as it was of reality, gave them no idea that history had in it anything but the ancient Jews — with some vague conception that there were Egyptians whom it was a virtue to spoil — had few windows that opened upon the real history of mankind. I have already explained how the so-called literature that dealt with the Reformation was narrow and misleading, really no more than a gloss upon the narrow interpretation of the Bible itself.

It is almost impossible now, when everything lies open to criticism, to realize how severely handicapped such a people were when they sought nourishment for the mind. Naturally, it must be understood that there were among them men and women who had a broader outlook, some with what is called worldly culture and, at the same time curious as it must have seemed to many, with deep and profound conceptions of religion; but Pioneer development, even at the best estate, had very few of them, and they were seldom accepted as leaders.

This even accounts for the constant swinging of the pendulum in the matter of the classics. As the Church itself, when it had no competition, had revived culture against its will it had to swing back to Aristotle and Plato whose highest function was that of reporters, recording the lofty thoughts of Socrates who, like Jesus, had written nothing, so, in later ages, and under cruder conditions, there was a necessity for escape from intellectual monotony by such an enlargement of the Hebrew heritage that it

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could know something more about the Greeks and Romans. The knowledge gained from these aspirations was narrow, its beneficiaries few in number, but even in the most secluded communities there was always a man or men to carry on this work. Wherever this man or these men came to the front there was a leader, doing his work quite as distinctly as if he had tried to conquer a country or do any other creative act.

### HOW THE ARTS WERE NEGLECTED

NOR was this mental aridity due to lack of native ability or to absence of desire to know. When opportunity brought with it emancipation, when the horizon was widened almost instantaneously, these people, especially their families, showed that they were able to accumulate knowledge and to use it to common advantage, and doing this they became more rather than less devoted to real religion. The cases in which, outside of theology, the things of the intellect were deemed important were not many in the earliest days or until the close of the Civil War. Education was desired but it was deemed rather a means for increasing the material value of the human being than of adding to the pleasures and triumphs of mind — thus making it mainly a useful auxiliary to a trade.

It would be beyond human power to estimate how many fine natural voices went to waste, like the flower “born to blush unseen and waste its sweetness on the desert air”; but there was no music to sing, no teacher to train, no congregations or audiences to hear. All the musical

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instruments now known had then been long in existence, but neither organ, piano, or harp, sent up its sweet sounds either for itself or as an accompaniment; while the violin, that most exquisite of all, could only be heard furtively in the hands of a rude, often a clownish, wielder of the bow in some forbidden dance. Otherwise it was merely deemed the herald that invited to hell-fire, and if listened to without protest brought this as a permanent, an assured fate.

Pictures in any form were almost unknown. The engraving, except in some rudely illustrated Bible, was not seen on the wall or in the family album. Illustrated papers had not yet come to their own. Before 1860 the rude magazine of the day had not penetrated to any great depth in this Pioneer area, while the attractive fashion-plate was rarely seen. Flamboyant "Lady-Books" were indeed published, somewhere in the country, but their distribution was narrow. The village milliner did not need much help to make attractive sunbonnets or others almost unchanging in form for successive generations; while the housemother and the growing girl had enough of the artistic gift to design, construct, and fit the attractive print dress of the day. It generally required a journey for some distance to find models or patterns for fashioning the silk gown (necessary for a wedding) which, once made, lasted a lifetime and descended as an heirloom in the family.

Looked at from any modern point of view the life of the average man and woman seems narrow to a degree hardly credible when the nearness of the time is considered.

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Probably no spectacle in history is more interesting than the rapidity of these outward changes, in this area, in the half century between 1840 and 1890. The people who flourished in either year would hardly have known those who lived at the beginning or the end of the period. The truth of this is emphasized when it is known that they were of the same stock, the same families, living on the same soil, under the same institutions, and in spite of the fact, too, that the average of mental ability and character, owing to the later dilution by immigration, was probably higher at the earlier than at the later date.

It was a time of almost monumental dullness. These people were so terribly in earnest, so full of what they thought their mission, so absorbed in the work about them, so convinced that they had acquired the creative faculty for themselves, that they forgot how to unbend with grace. There was a fear to laugh or smile lest they might either be deemed frivolous, or imperil their souls. The worst was that they had so lost the sense of humor that they could not see what ridiculous beings they were or how they were giving a tinge of unnecessary sadness to everything they touched. They were really creative in material things, but they thought and talked about them so much that they could not give credit for seriousness to anybody who seemed to look more broadly or less solemnly at life.

It may, perhaps, be well enough for some man to become the devotee of one book and neither to know nor care for any other. It may be a virtue, a necessity, an affecta-

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tion, or an amiable weakness and nobody but he can be much the worse for his peculiarity; but when a whole people is thus cabined, cribbed, confined, and that, too, at a time when so much of intellectual interest was going on in the great world and when it could not even realize the strength and beauty of the book, or see its weakness or defect, it is one of the most pathetic of all the sights that history affords. Only the New England Puritan and the American Pioneer have been subjected to this fate. That both should have emerged from this comatose condition of intellect is the highest tribute that can be paid to the potency of their native ability, character, persistence, and reserve power.

It is small cause for wonder that out of this real life of a people, with all its religious sincerity, idealism, industry, and manifold attractions, accompanied as it was by its narrowness and fanaticism, its inevitable hypocrisy, its pretension and self-consciousness, its ignorance, sometimes almost unprecedented — it is, I submit, not surprising that there came no poet, no romancer, no musician, no great preacher with the soul and the utterance of the prophet. It is rather given to us to look upon it with pride as the day of the practical; of the hard work incident to a vigorous creative period; of a high average of achievement within the limits of its own opportunities; of a wholesomeness of ambition that included all who could bear the awful pressure of such an atmosphere; of an idealism which believed, in all sincerity, that it was carrying humanity forward to a Promised Land never before



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so much as thought of, much less seen. As it was idyllic in its conception and did the work it saw before it, we ought not to insist that it should also have been faultless in all the graces.

Those who see nothing in the Pioneer life but the gloom, the sadness, the deprivation, the hard work, the falling by the wayside, know nothing of it. If the aspiring novelist, the pretentious sociologist, and the anxious uplifter who — with all the advantages of their time, with their opportunities to know — so love to emphasize these things could only realize that individual and social independence and sea room for a great people to develop its powers, were not better worth having than weak poems, imitative perhaps of a third class predecessor; or impossible epics vainly seeking to describe material achievements; so-called histories that might have sought to embalm some commonplace act or foster a prejudice; or perhaps novels even feebler than those of our later day, then they will do well to find subjects better fitted to their capacity and insight.

*SOME PHILOSOPHY OF THE PIONEER LIFE*



*INGREDIENTS IN THE MELTING POT*

THIS study has revolved as on a pivot around the settlement and life found during its period in a single State or community. This concentration has not been due to the unusual or assumed importance of this particular spot of earth, but for the reasons that its settlement and growth marked the end of an era, that its development was so recent as to make it a familiar though not an easy story, and that it is my fortune not only to know the conditions there but to study them in both their direct and remoter ramifications, personal as well as historical.

While all these conditions were not limited to Iowa the fact that they had persisted there demonstrated their permanence. The customs, manners, ideas, methods of thinking and acting, which had stood the test of nearly two hundred and fifty years of unresting internal migration, of changed scenes, of new admixtures of peoples, of shifting religious and political theories, had demonstrated their worthiness to be gathered into a sheaf typifying the harvest reaped by the efforts of the American Pioneer.

In my own mind I had divided the peopling of the United States roughly into three parts. The first was that conquest of the long, thin strip along the Atlantic coast, with a hinterland reaching to the top of the Allegheny Mountains. This I designated as the settlement incident to the colonial period.

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The second, reaching from the mountain top to the Missouri River and from the Great Lakes to the Southern boundary of Tennessee, including the old Northwest Territory, the territory south of the Ohio, and a fraction of the Louisiana Purchase, I assigned to the Pioneer period. It includes ten States, though the complete settlement of the tenth did not come within the years chosen as the limit for the beginning and the end. This area contains just over a half-million square miles, a wilderness and an unknown prairie in 1770; a great empire less than three generations later in 1870. Each of the later of these periods or eras derives directly and wholly from its predecessors; their growth and history are thus so closely intertwined as to be inseparable.

My imagined third division comprised all the rest of the country (even Alaska) which has fallen under the same political control within the interval. But this vast area lies entirely outside my scheme, both in time and space. I should designate its acquisition and settlement as the period of exploration and expansion. Only a small part of its surface belonged, actually or constructively, either to the United States or to any State at the time of the adoption of the Constitution in 1787. It has been made, both as a whole and in every part, by the industry, enterprise, restlessness, and character which have overflowed into it from the first two divisions. It is an interesting and valuable addition to the scheme of things as it presented itself to the Fathers; but it has brought to the common stock nothing that it did not have already. Its contribution

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did not consist of people or institutions; it was limited to acres. The only exception to this generalization is a part of the South which, having a different industrial system, does not fall within my purview.

The whole of America, despite its seeming simplicity and crudeness, is made more difficult of understanding because of the varieties of life and character found side by side. Practically all phases of human evolution have been working silently and together, each reacting upon the others. Thus the science that deals with early man has been revived by the careful study of the Indian; the negro in his real character and in various stages of his growth may be better understood here than even in Africa; while forms of culture, so varied as often to exist in many widely-sundered parts of the world, have been seen working alongside, each disturbing the balance of the other.

For these reasons the hackneyed figure of the melting-pot means something more than the admixture, successful or otherwise, of populations, human elements divergent in origin, religion, political conditions, or social customs. It does not apply alone to the races defined by the ethnologist — that conventional classification into white, black, red, yellow, or brown, of which he takes account — but to indefinable features that go much deeper. Into this crucible have been thrown peoples sundered from each other so many hundreds or thousands of years ago that they have gradually adjusted themselves to novel environments and conditions which have modified their human nature without wholly changing it.

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In spite of the lapse of time the Germans of the days of Tacitus do not have many characteristics in common with the Anglo-Saxon or the Dane belonging to the same general family. The descendant of the Roman patrician does not meet familiarly with the hereditary legionary and still less with those who derive from the ancient slave. The Englishman, a born conqueror, does not the more readily assimilate with the defeated Irish Celt because both come together in the Pioneer area rather in their own islands. Even the misused and often contrasted figures of the Puritan and the Cavalier were not more likely to prove their affinity for each other because they met in Kentucky rather than in Westmoreland. Thus, the fusing process was really far more difficult in the Pioneer period than in the colonial. In the latter men were drawn from a small area where knowledge of each other was easier to acquire than when, as in the former, those from North Carolina were almost as strange to those from Maine as if they had come from lands sundered by both sea and language. If, on scenes novel to both, the man from the whale fisheries was thrown into contact with the other whose calling it was to grow tobacco there could be little in common between them, either in knowledge or interest. The same was true in religion. The extreme Calvinist or neo-Calvinist was not likely to have much more sympathy with the Quaker or the Virginian Episcopalian than they had even when ignorant of each other's existence.

Thus, the early Pioneer era had a far more difficult task than that of welding a few foreigners, mainly of a simple

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type, into an amalgam with themselves or each other. Their problems were analogous to those which, after the eleventh century, had been solved in England; while for another seven centuries they left confusion worse confounded in Germany. This is why it was that, until the second generation when all along the path of the Pioneer he had come fairly to his own, there was nothing resembling a fair degree of unity in idea and aim. When this time came there was nobody in Tennessee or Kentucky who was willing, as many of the earliest comers had been, to become subjects of Spain merely because that country owned the mouth of the great river which flowed along their boundaries and whose importance they instinctively recognized.

Such unity was possible only after these people, scattering over large areas, had fitted themselves with an industrial system, redolent of their soil, a component part of the air they breathed; or until they had so modified inherited religious, political, and social institutions that they reflected what these people had learned for themselves. These early, adventurous settlers, few and sparsely distributed as they were, had not come out of fixed conditions. The struggle for independence had not, in reality, produced any large measure of real unity or a knowledge of each other strong enough to bind them together. The impulse creating these things could not be aroused until the second war with Great Britain with its alternation of weakness and strength : its invasions, its striking victories, its discouraging defeats, its development in new and unknown regions, of commanding figures whose work



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it was to be to promote union and finally so to cement it as to make it impregnable. Andrew Jackson and Henry Clay and Daniel Webster, scarcely lads during the struggle for Independence, were to make the Union both possible and necessary, and thus so insure the assimilation of the American people that in the end nothing but unity could be thought of as the destiny of a young nation.

### *THE SLOW PROCESSES OF GROWTH*

I HAVE tried to show that these makers of what was in effect a new outlying nation had in them good blood and fine temper; the strong spirit of adventure which underlies the whole of English development; and that confidence in themselves without which no progress is possible. They had that much stronger characteristic, inherent in them and thus unconscious : the ability to do with all their might whatever their hands found to do. It might be simple, it was certain to be exacting; but it was always sure and steady, never spasmodic. They knew by intuition that they had a mission, but they did not proclaim it overmuch from the housetops; and yet they never forgot the virtue of hard work, the right of men to religious toleration, or the duty to assert and defend political independence. They were individual to a degree almost exaggerated, but out of it and by reason of it there grew, instinctively, a mass discipline which both led them to want to work together and then made them do it. The people of this Pioneer area are the one example in history in which nothing was enforced from the outside. The colonies, one

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and all, had to accept laws, rulers, customs, manners, and religion from authorities three thousand miles away; the Pioneer took with him as part of his inheritance only the features he wanted and could use, throwing away the rest or permitting them to fall into desuetude.

The adjustment of such a people to new physical environment must of necessity be a slow, painful process. It makes necessary an amount of experiment, the extent of which is never realized until long after when it is seen that while some of it has succeeded most of it has failed. The continual digging up of the plant to see how much it has grown is not wholly conducive to its progress. As an effect, there was the constant disappearance from the hurly-burly of this life of many historic features no longer necessary. In the final development of the national idea many of these discarded elements have had to be restored; in this process the strongest factors have been heredity and tradition.

As there was no sea within many hundreds of miles and access to one could only be had by crossing a mountain barrier then next to unscalable, knowledge of commerce and shipping gradually grew dim. And yet there lay hid away within many an individual some instinct that when aroused, now and then, as chance permitted, by James Fenimore Cooper or Walter Scott or Herman Melville, so made the sea a necessity that the boy would run off and find his way to a ship just as the compass points infallibly to the Pole Star. Now and again, in another individual with different nature or heredity, the longing

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would become so strong that its victim, tired by the monotony of wilderness or prairie, must find relief in the charm of the mountain though it had never been seen other than with the eye of the mind. In like manner, a natural tendency to mechanics was a loadstone which would draw many a boy back to the older settlements where some factory making articles that he had merely heard of would get a new unexpected addition to the ranks of its efficient and devoted workmen and inventors.

But, while the Pioneer left much behind him and had to learn many new things, always by hard knocks, he also improved many of the qualities he had inherited. He constantly bettered the gifts that nature and training had hidden away unused in his forebears. He learned to run a straighter and deeper furrow, to cut trees and handle them with more neatness and celerity, and to get more and better work out of himself and his human or animal helpers. He so improved the quality of the senses that sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch all served him better and became keener and keener. He could shoot quicker, farther, and straighter. It soon became natural for him to know, at increased distances, the sound of his own wagon wheels clicking on their axles, the neigh or the whinny of his horses, or the moo of his cows. The bark of every dog in his neighborhood, the age, size, color, and weight of every horse, even the squeal of his own or his neighbors' hogs, were as easy for him to recognize as was the gait within the farthest limit of sight of his child or a neighbor. He had to know these things in order to carry on the

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functions of the life about him. These gifts saved him steps and worry and he developed them with a severity as relentless as if they had been his personal servants.

### FOREIGNERS AMONG PIONEER POPULATIONS

THE assimilation of foreign-born peoples was easy for the reason that until after 1850 in the case of the Irish, and after 1852 with the Germans, and the Scandinavians, the Pioneer region whatever the origin of its people was distinctly American and English-speaking. By that time the real primary work of the settler was done, so that foreign peoples came as gleaners. They had none of the spirit of the Pioneer who was essentially a farmer, while the other was prone to add himself to the expanding urban element. Until after the Civil War, and then only to a small extent, the foreigner, however welcome or however great in force, was not considered as making a real or vital contribution to the development of the region except by numbers and then only to the lower ranks of labor. He was not supposed to understand our institutions, with their complicated ideals and their policies, all deemed highly original and difficult. As a body, more or less apart from the mass, they were expected to adjust themselves willy-nilly and at once to our conditions as they found them. The so-called American movement soon ceased to be a truculent or offensive force; but it had ploughed deep furrows into thought and sentiment and nowhere, perhaps, had these gone farther down into the soil than in the region under study.

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So, the continental foreigner had enough to keep him busy in the humble work assigned to and accepted by him, especially when he had also to maintain the religious and social conditions that he had brought with him. He did not intermingle, in any potent way, with his neighbors who, being the accepted rulers in every community, were zealous to perform the functions that belonged to them by both prescription and numbers. His religion, if different, was merely tolerated, and he was not supposed to have any politics separate from the accepted ideas and parties which stood, ready made, to his hand. The Pioneer had no use for imported social customs and habits (he lived before the hyphen had become human); his industries were his own and he knew how to direct them however warmly he might welcome the muscular arms that would relieve him of some part of the almost irreducible drudgery that lay all about him. Therefore, he endured the foreigner as a workman but was not enthusiastic in welcoming him as a citizen or even as a man and neighbor. As a consequence, the end of the Civil War, just over a third of a century after the opening of our special period, the ever-growing number of Celtic-Irish and Germans were constrained to associate and marry among themselves and practically to live as a class apart.

The weakness of these foreign elements lay in the fact that they were never balanced. They were drawn so distinctly from the peasant type that there was not a sufficient proportion of the educated and successful classes either to drive or to draw them out of their settled stolidity. Thus,

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they were unbalanced forces even among themselves. They had more abstract knowledge than was credited to them, because it was not recognized as either existent or necessary. The Pioneers as a class thought themselves quite sufficient to themselves. They did not like Catholics and in their opinion the Irish could contribute nothing to such an essentially Protestant society. All native Germans looked alike to them and all of them that they either knew or had heard of were the Hessians which their own proximity to the War of Independence did not encourage much to favor for those who spoke the same language; while as for the Dutch and Scandinavians who came in small groups or colonies they so kept to themselves for a time that no great effort was made to find out who or what they were.

If in the fortune of settlement the Irish and Germans had come earlier the effect upon the dissipation of bigotry and intolerance would have been wholesome; but this would have been impossible because they had no spark of that Pioneer spirit or character which would have enabled them to do the work necessary. So nothing remained but to accept these immigrants as and when they came, put them to the work they could and would do, grumbling all the while at the fate that opened the gates at our ports to all comers, thus postponing to the future what have come to be known as the problems incident to the thing called assimilation — a word seldom used because it indicated a policy which nobody then believed possible or necessary. If the arrogance and self-sufficiency of the German at

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home had survived to tell, after the Great War, its anticipated tale of conquests, its catalogue of achievements would no doubt, Munchausen-like, have been large and comprehensive of many peoples who had lent themselves to its potent influence; but no amount of assertiveness, no assumption, would have been strong enough to include within its achievements a claim to have made America in its Pioneer period or any other.

The new settlements were strong from the beginning because they had only to adjust themselves to ideas and not to assimilate people who, within any recent period, had seriously differed from each other in the fundamentals of character, aim, or belief. They were strong, as free men always are, while they resented coddling and when needing either the curb or the spur they applied it to themselves. All the varying elements however different in geographical origin were so much in harmony that their needs and opportunities were common to all: their ideas were substantially the same. The farther west they went the more clearly they became interchangeable parts in a life that before 1870 had been as thoroughly standardized as the most perfect of modern machines. Their pride was not centered in money or in the men who boasted themselves self-made; but in the fact that they had tried, with some success, to do their part in maintaining and extending the institutions they had inherited. To these qualities they yielded a devotion almost greater than any of the same kind thus far recorded in the experience of mankind.

## Some of the Motives Behind Migration

### *SOME OF THE MOTIVES BEHIND MIGRATION*

WHILE the material does not exist for certainty or dogmatism in announcing laws or even the changing rules that govern internal migration there are tendencies which, seeming to be fairly uniform, explain in some measure the gradual peopling of the Pioneer region. They must be so formulated as to include the moving back as well as the original going forward and the list of them is neither small nor simple. They may, perhaps, be fairly included in the following classifications :

1. When in any community, whether settled thickly or sparsely, the native males between 20 and 50 show any striking disparity over the females within the same age limits the number seeking new homes is increased. Owing to the absence of the hereditary migratory instinct this rule is open to exception among the children born here of foreigners in the first and second generations.

2. In communities where the females outnumber the males in any considerable proportion, migration tends to be low or to decline. The woman, left to herself, seems always to tend to greater stability or permanence of residence. The logic of these rules working itself out appears to be that in the matter of new settlements, as in mating or other qualities, the male is the seeking or restless force. In neither migration nor remigration is the female a sensible element in initiating the search for new homes.

3. In new settlements the birth rate tends to increase most and to maintain itself best in the degree that the number of males is greater than that of females. Up to



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a given point this increase is greater in accordance with the extent of this disparity of males between 20 and 50.

4. When early in the history of a centralized community or State, the foreign-born element becomes a strong force it is more stable on its new scenes than the native so far as the settlement of any pioneer community is concerned. This is shown especially in the history of New York, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and Michigan. Concurrent with this tendency is the other that in internal migration the appearance of a large number of foreign born drives out as migrants or reduces the fecundity of the native or distinctly American original stocks.

5. Any considerable migration into a comparatively new district (one that has been settled from twenty to thirty-five years) pushes out the native born prematurely. This tendency showed itself more strongly in Maine after its admission into the Union; in Vermont and New York, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa. It also applies to Tennessee, Kentucky, and Missouri, which lost to both the newer free and slave districts. The desire of many newcomers, with some ready money, to purchase partly improved farms drives into remoter parts many men who are moved both by a speculative desire for larger holdings and by that wanderlust so characteristic of the Pioneer.

6. When about 30 or 33 years have passed after a given settlement has been made, the young generation brought or born into it begins like bees to swarm into the newer districts almost unknown to the fathers and mothers alive at the original removal. This includes representatives

## Some of the Motives Behind Migration

of all the types entering into the original settlement but applies in larger degree to the more industrious so that the quality of population tends to deterioration. Those known as the really poor thus develop conservative tendencies. This is due to the fact that the human parasite thrives best where there is a considerable measure of stability with its resulting numbers and material prosperity.

7. Remigration or moving back generally takes place within the first five or ten years after individual change or settlement. This is limited, almost wholly, to those in the middle class of migrants whose success has been delayed or is doubtful.

8. The migrations that have settled all the new parts of the country have never been either originated or forced by famine or by a serious failure of food crops. In the history of the United States, no plague in an old settlement has been the signal or cause of making a new one, either near or remote. Zymotic diseases, almost universal, have by reason of this fact practically neutralized each other.

9. The development of given districts was nearly always slow, a few people distributing themselves over a much larger area than it was possible for them to fill. There was never a real rush into newly-opened lands like that seen when Oklahoma was opened. Thus each neighborhood grew steadily — almost painfully. Everything was in such a state of flux that nothing could be finished whether in farm, house, outbuildings, machinery, roads, schools, or developments of any kind, public or private. The best of

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which a given district was capable was never attainable, and all the neighborhoods in it have the same general character both in people and in facilities for living.

10. The character of each separate community was so fixed by its first settlers that the change was slight until the transportation system was completely revolutionized by the railroad going into one place or around another.

11. At each successive removal, if made to any considerable distance, the Pioneer sloughed off some peculiar notion, idea, method, or prejudice. He became less truculent or assertive; he tended to talk less and to act as if he were more distinctly a constituent, responsible part of a great people and less a lay figure in a neighborhood; and outward forms of his religion changed slowly, while his confident belief in our political ideas and institutions was rather increased than diminished by added distance from the centers of population.

12. The conditions were uniformly those incident to farm life. There were no town industries, customs, amusements, manners, no town taste or temptations, and no town opportunities or drawbacks.

13. Everywhere within the Pioneer era there was seen the same restless, wandering American, inclined to be curious about his neighbors and taciturn about himself. From the western slopes of the Alleghenies to the extreme watershed of the Missouri there was little change in the essentials of life. Each succeeding zone tended to reproduce the human qualities and conditions of its predecessors; even the absence of timber had little effect because, whether

## An Example of the Will Power of Men

wilderness or prairie, the character of the settler was about the same. The same consciousness of manhood, the same sense of responsibility, the same confidence in the star that led him and his country on were in evidence. The transplanted Englishman was merging himself slowly into the real American who was asserting himself with little let or hindrance.

14. I have not thought it necessary to incorporate in these rules or tendencies those laws of migration, generally recognized as obvious, under which both migration and immigration tend to proceed on isothermal lines; that the greatest movement into a given area proceeds from contiguous territory or districts and the smallest from the more remote; and that, all other considerations being fairly equal, migration is most likely to attract people professing the same religion, or speaking the same language, or living under the same general social and industrial conditions.

### AN EXAMPLE OF THE WILL POWER OF MEN

THE outstanding fact in this Pioneer era is the universal diffusion of a yeomanry: ambitious, strong, selective, tolerant, religious, hungry for the soil and yet not hard or grasping; patriotic almost to the verge of truculence; industrious and demanding industry in others; charitable and kindly but not soft; moved by an intelligence which, though sometimes rude and crude, was general; touching elbows with each other, while undertaking the tasks that lay nearest their hands; and never seeking to create a serious disproportion between demand and supply whether in

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things material or things spiritual. During the hundred years necessary to stake out the half million square miles which in 1770 lay before them, they carried on this work without canvassing for associates, or formal colonizing; without apparent plan or prearrangement; with only the smallest supply of accumulated capital; and without the appliances universally employed in modern movements of a commercial or speculative character. No like development, so distinctly individual, so independent of accumulated resources, would have been possible in shipping, manufacture, mining, or even in the fisheries, when the latter could be carried on in the free, open sea; such an experiment could only be successful in agriculture.

And yet these men worked in a natural medium wholly without inherent value. Land of itself when unused is worth no more than the leaping waves of the sea or the winds that blow over mountains, or the power hidden in distant, unknown cataracts. Value is brought out only by the unremitting, stubborn labor of man. The woods and prairies of the Pioneer region were in existence before Daniel Boone crossed the mountains just as they are to-day; but, without labor their untold millions of acres were as useless as the deserts of Sahara or Gobi. And it must not be forgotten that neither institutions nor government had much to do with the making of this great laboratory which now fills the granaries of the world with the products needed for comfort or luxury. That a world fighting merely for the right to live can go on at all is due wholly to the initiative, the energy, and the adventurous spirit of

## An Example of the Will Power of Men

individuals long dead who went voluntarily into isolation and endured hardships and toils far more severe than those necessary to give them subsistence in every neighborhood of origin. They accepted these penalties with a philosophy that puts to shame the discontented masses who, now in the world, owe their existence to the struggles with nature of their predecessors.

The Pioneer in his relations to his world came nearer to illustrating Hobbes's theory of a universal state of war than any other series of known generations. He had to wage war with the red men who averted extermination by acceptance of its enforced alternative : positive impotence. He warred with nature in her fiercest moods, quite uncertain whether the frigid or the torrid was the worse, and with a loneliness little less complete than that of Saint Simeon Stylites in his desert tower. He had to war with the neglect, the ignorance, the indifference of those who had neither the enterprise and courage to follow him, nor the desire or ability to understand his motives and his sacrifices. Everywhere and always he had to make his own way fighting, as all men must, with his own lusts and weaknesses; with the efficiency inherent in organized society; with the assertiveness, pretension, and mediocrity that always exist and seek to perpetuate themselves; and with economic conditions, the ferocity of which he himself could not fully comprehend. It is often claimed that he did not have to tear down and thus had nothing to do but to construct; but if any reader will only recall for a moment that that great clumsy giant of a forest always

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confronted him, he may perhaps realize that trees were after all the worst enemy the Pioneer had to meet and conquer.

In spite of these drawbacks and penalties, this life was rounded and complete from the beginning. It carried with it into every nook and corner, not merely the man going forth to war, adventure, or fortune, but the Christian family with all that the term connotes. It needed no missionaries to bring the Gospel to it; no government to protect it; and no outside authority to set up and conduct a school even in the smallest new neighborhood. It had its own economic organization; it fed and clothed itself; and it began to contribute at once to the support of those left behind. Added to all these virtues, there was no religious persecution, no political proscription, no stratified race differences, no overcrowding of population, no dearth of food, and no internal wars or rumors of wars with his fellows or equals.

With all these powers and attractions it would be difficult to exaggerate the imperious hardness of the times or of the men who had to live through them. Their characters were rigid, with few of the higher graces; their religion was a faith without a trace of that reason which all faith naturally both professes and scorns; their politics were formal and narrow; leading them into the worship of abstractions and applying to the affairs of a nation the comprehension fashioned for a parish; their mental vision was keen but narrow; they were merciless in their attitude towards the unsuccessful because appeals for material

## The Physical Surroundings

charity were unnecessary in the face of the Creator's bounty, which made the presence of a dependent little less than an offense against society itself.

These contradictory qualities make difficult an adequate understanding of the philosophy of Pioneer life. That men, just fairly settled in one place where they had surrounded themselves with some measure of comfort, should, with deliberate purpose, give up everything and go out again into a rough world without population or anything but assured hardship is, to the luxury-loving ideas of our age, beyond conception in this or any other country; accordingly, we do not comprehend it; but, if this is so with our own people who are the kinsmen, the descendants of the Pioneer, why should there be surprise when the people of other and older nations have looked upon all Americans as mere denizens of the backwoods?

### THE PHYSICAL SURROUNDINGS

HITHERTO in history, every great western people had come to its heritage upon a soil that was intractable, but in a climate with many virtues—a fact attested by Egypt, Assyria, Palestine, and Phoenecia. On the other hand, Greece, Rome, Germany, Holland, France, England, Virginia, and New England in succession have had to overcome woods, floods, the desert, aridity, rocks, swamps, sand, encroachments of the sea or the jungle, or an unfriendly soil before they could adapt themselves to conditions; but in none was there the severest peril—that incident to freezing.



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Other than the forest, which has been the universal handicap of newly discovered countries, the Pioneer found himself in a region with plain and elevation fairly distributed, an ample and regular rainfall, a rare atmosphere, and a variety of vegetable products which provided assured sustenance to himself and to the auxiliary animal life which had, for the most part, to be introduced from the outside. If extremes in heat and cold were in evidence their continuance in season was limited. With the possible exception of France no other commanding spot on earth was so well entitled to be designated as in the temperate zone.

In the light of the uniform human experience, already noted, the question might well have been raised as to the effect of such great fertility upon the character of men when their forerunners had been accustomed to subdue the earth in much harder surroundings; whether so many advantages might not conduce to weakness, to the growth of sloth, and to an over-development in the midst of so much assured plenty of the purely animal side of the human being. It was clear, however, that if in the spring nature, in such a climate, wakes up slowly, when once aroused all her energies were fully at work. To follow her with success, there were during the next eight months no resting hours. While everything in the woods or on the prairie was filled with the very joy of growth, strength, and life, so man had to adjust himself to this restless energy, to keep pace to the limit of his powers. During this period there was no place for indolence, no time for play, no room for languor, no future for doubt or hesitation.

## The Physical Surroundings

As a result, instead of weakness there came strength; instead of softness there was a tendency to hardness. In a climate and with a soil filled with so much of energy, the healthy individual who was not ready to do his part was taboo. If he could not adjust himself to all this partiality of nature he must not expect sympathy or help from neighbors who knew and appreciated both their privilege and their duty. The Pioneer region was not, therefore, a place for the lazy or the aimless. It mattered nothing that the man, because of youth or unfriendly fortune, had not yet wrested from the earth any store of property; so long as he would work and struggle alongside his neighbors, he could command every encouragement and all the assistance necessary; but the West never lent itself to the plans and purposes incident to a settled or hopeless poverty. It never expected to get forward with irregular industry or short hours; hence, from the beginning and even to this day, it has never been in any large area or with any considerable proportion of the successors of its original population over-hospitable to the methods of organized labor in its appeal for shorter hours or its entrance upon strikes that interrupt continuity of effort.

With all its faults, the saving grace of life in those times lay in that iron discipline not enforced by law, the order of the soldier, or the decree of the despot. It was so much deeper that it may be said to have been inherent in free men working for themselves, for each other, and for high ideals which at all periods of history have been the main-springs of human progress.

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### *A FARMER AND AN IDEALIST*

WHILE, therefore, we valiantly undertake to study, and often vainly seek to understand, the philosophy of civilizations, remote in time or place, we have not thus far shown any general disposition to see or learn the truth about this real American Pioneer who marched slowly and relentlessly across wide areas; never was turned aside for the mere search of gold, or any other industrial ignis fatuus; went always with wife and children, making innumerable homes where none existed before; was careless of limitations or hardships; always the devotee of settled ideas and institutions; standing ever for order and security. This personified Pioneer was always a farmer with that inherent love for the soil without which no aggregation of men, however numerous or strong, has yet become a real people. With all our worship of the mechanical, we are in danger of forgetting this one fact that both as a nation and as a people our pestilent humors, faults, frailties, everything that must be lost in the process of man-making, have been filtered down into mother earth.

This Pioneer lived in the ideal. Hard for him as was his particular present he felt intuitively that the future in this world as well as the next held something that humanity had long been waiting for. It did not easily mirror itself to his mental vision; but was as clear to his hope and expectation as the sunlight to his eyes. He felt, somehow, that he was building up a new segment of human society in which men would have a better outlook than ever before. He was not thinking in terms of modern problems,

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he was not going into rhapsody over some impossible Utopia; but, collectively, as well as individually, he did believe in all sincerity, as human being should, that he was leaving behind him a world better than that into which he had come without consent or responsibility of his own. If this life sometimes seems to the student or the participator to be hard or unfeeling, if it strikes a metallic chord, once examine it with care and it is seen to be clear and honest in the belief that complete religious tolerance, real political liberty, a general desire for knowledge with a constantly expanding idea of how it can be attained, were worth any kind of effort or sacrifice.

It is no cause for wonder that such aspirations, even if they were nothing else, should produce that intensity of character which has sometimes led to temporary failures or bred characteristics not wholly attractive. That the outward form should sometimes be so crude as to excite laughter or ridicule, or to be weakening in itself, is not surprising when the number and variety of persons and interests are considered. When the seeming fanaticism wore itself out there remained a courage, a sense of fidelity to truth and to duty done, that showed how honest excess may right itself and do penance for its blunders. If the mechanism of life was simple; if it was thought better first to think of things and then do them rather than to talk endlessly about them; to investigate a delinquency or a failure and then to correct the one or avoid the other, rather than to refer them to some incompetent, self-satisfied committee; to avoid hurtful technicalities and so to do

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business promptly; then it will be proper to overlook many of the so-called graces, now exaggerated. It was what Lincoln loved to call "the common people" and Cleveland "the plain people of the land", because it saw its way clearly and did its duty as opportunity afforded. There was not much need for veneer whether in social life or furniture.

That, judged by the standards of to-day, there was an outward social barrenness cannot be denied; but the homes in which it was supposed to be found did produce men and women who when they went out into the world were able because of innate character so to assimilate what it had to offer as to do their full part in its making, in its protection from harm, and in its steady improvement.

Such qualities came out of these people because they were in them; and it is the more creditable that they should have developed, when during this long journey the higher romance of the world left upon them practically no mark. During this long, painful journey of a race through a virgin forest, no fairies perpetuated themselves; no pixies interested, amused, or alarmed the innumerable children to whom all these gifts would have been the poetry of life; and no sprites played up and down the lofty trunks of trees, or through their spreading branches. So far as possible the dour Puritanism of preceding generations had killed legends; and traditions, however fine, were refused the right to live or to perpetuate themselves. The imagination was discouraged so far as it took the form of poem or novel; and yet it so survived in their religion, that these

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suppressed gifts came back in due time in undiminished vigor. And yet there will always remain regret for the loss which these generations of mankind suffered without even so much as knowing it.

### INTELLECTUAL NIMBLENESS AND POWER

As THE Aryan race has made its way into the cold latitudes, so strongly contrasted with the hot climes in which man is supposed to have begun his pilgrimage; so it is often forgotten how this fact demonstrates that to make headway in such temperatures men must have about as much courage as they would need to go as soldiers into the bloodiest and most hotly-contested of wars. When every industry, even the most rudimentary, must be carried on in the face of the most severe of natural handicaps, the absence of warmth; when men and animals must have been inured to this exposure during many generations in order merely to exist; when all the activities of life — economic, educational, social, religious — must be built up and maintained in the face of this unconquerable rigor, some of the fundamental difficulties become fairly open to knowledge. When, after these handicaps have been overcome to such a degree that the regions of the earth, known as temperate but in reality a curious cross between the frigid and the torrid, have become those in which what is known as human progress has been most rapid and stable, then the contribution made in the New World may fairly be measured. For, it is here alone in the vast area east of the middle North Cordilleras that the severity of the cold

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is nowhere tempered or reduced by the influence of the ocean currents which have made the whole of Europe, in even higher latitudes, mild beyond American comparison.

The knowledge of this fact accounts for the doubt so long expressed by students about the permanent adaptability of the white man to such a region. It is a question for which partial occupancy, during only four hundred years, does not furnish facts in sufficient number to warrant dogmatism or finality. So, we have only to consider the result which shows that, whether previous races lived or died, flourished or degenerated here, it remains true that to all outward appearances the white man has successfully made his way into the most northerly reaches of the American continent; and nowhere else has this success seemed greater than in this Middle West of the United States where the Pioneer passed through his struggles.

How have these dwellers in God's great outdoors adjusted themselves to the things of the mind? What use did they make of the universal artistic heritage of men in its various forms of music, literature, painting, sculpture, and architecture, and what contributions are they likely yet to make to their preservation or improvement? Is there anything to indicate that the natural surroundings, the great broad plains, the mighty rivers, the fertile valleys, are to the people who live among them anything other than plains, rivers, and valleys? Arts pertain to men and not to nature. In all their forms they must develop around men. Nor do they take much cognizance of mere natural resources. No enduring epic has been written with material

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development as its theme; no statue can reproduce a mountain; no painting can delineate a river or a harbor; and no music can echo the cadences of a waterfall or an ocean. All must revolve about man and men whose figures or achievements must fire the imagination. Homer does, indeed, sing of the sea, but it is a sea conquered by man; Milton and Dante chant the glories of heaven and the pains of hell, but they are an earthly heaven and a sub-lunary hell peopled by men. Shakespeare cares naught for physical surroundings or conditions and only uses them as a stage whereon to set and exploit the acts and antics of men.

So whatever the Pioneers may have attempted or done or aspired to do, the time has not yet come, and perhaps will not arrive for another century or two, to write a history of their mental achievements. Their mission, so far as creative power is concerned, has thus far been material. They have wrought in order to bring plenty to millions of human beings otherwise hungry, unclothed, or unsheltered — vast masses who, but for this beneficent bounty and the leadership that developed it, would either have suffered for the primary necessities of physical life or would not have been born into a beautiful world to do their duty as God has given them to see it.

The art of the world, however, is not limited to the painting, the marble figure, the metal urn, the potter's plate or bowl, or to the expression of the passions in a poem or on the stage. It came out in our Pioneers, as in all other people who have had it, in the making of objects



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of common use. The ploughshare of the village blacksmith was often no less a thing of beauty than his remote predecessor's iron gate, hammered out, now for a memorial in a church, or then for the king in his palace, or again for the peasant in his cottage; the graceful wheels made by some unknown Pioneer wheelwright were in many cases no less artistic than those fashioned for the chariot of a Pharaoh or a Caesar; a whip handle or a whiplash, an axe handle or a wooden bread bowl, all esteemed for their utility, were often as shapely as some urn which, resurrected from an Egyptian or an Etruscan tomb, assumes a place of pride in a museum or a collector's cabinet. Even in such an object of seeming ugliness as a worm fence there was often a delicacy and correctness that would have done credit to an artist at any period of human history. So it was in the best harness and bridles; while even a medieval knight need not to have been ashamed either of the form or distrustful of the comfort of the best saddle, often made by some remote artisan who had neither overlooked nor disdained the element of beauty.

Thus, looked at from the viewpoint of accepted standards, generally those fixed by people long since passed away, much fine work went into the production of what the unthinking believe to be common or even mean. The pot or the urn hid away in an Egyptian, a Greek, or an Etruscan grave to accommodate the dead during his dread journey across the Styx had been made for his use when alive. So it was in the wilderness and on the prairie. The great mass of Grecian or other pottery was either con-

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temptible or commonplace; but the best, made of an enduring material and devoted to holy or religious uses, survived. The best of the Pioneer's products may have been equally delicate in form; but, unhappily for its perpetuity, religion did not conjoin with sentiment to preserve it for a future time. So, while it is fashionable to sneer at the quality of some modern forms of the useful which are fully entitled to respect as having in them a fair degree of artistic design and finish, it is never safe to belittle the graces.

It is to be feared that, in these days, there prevails often a sham luxury for which many of its beneficiaries are unprepared by the necessary discipline of generations, so that many of these persons fondly think themselves intelligent when, as Lowell says, they see only "the artificial results of culture" without its realities. They are prone to overlook the sturdy manhood of the men who made possible the best of the present. Many of these successors now deign to patronize and thereby to reproach their ancestors on the same scenes for their lack of outward opportunity and to bewail their devotion to the material development upon which they themselves are dependent for what they have or imagine themselves to have. They forget that the man in the cottage now had conveniences or aids once denied to the man in the Palace or the Hall and that, in either, the thing which counts and makes for progress is, after all, the man, and not the shape or size of the building he lives in, or the so-called conveniences that surround him. There is little to show

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that, so far as making additions to them is concerned, these narrow critics, with all their boasted intelligence, are not quite as much strangers to the great poem, the inspiring prose writing or oration, the outstanding painting, or the loftiest music, as were the humble predecessors whom they condemn. It would also be safe to assume that the latter knew much less than the former about the dangerous movements behind the cheap agitators of the time or of the tenth rate, useless novels or poems of their own or any other age.

### *THE PIONEER PLAIN BUT NOT PRIMITIVE*

WE MUST take these people as they were and are. No more than any other generation of men can they be confused with ideal creatures living in some imagined world. It is enough to know that they carried into still newer and stranger scenes the virtues inherent for nearly two thousand years in the race to which they belonged and in the religion they professed. Perhaps more distinctively than ever before they found themselves closely related to the soil through which, after the universal manner of men, they filtered their worst humors. If they were narrow in religion, fanatical in politics, provincial in manners, these qualities were the product of a rough, isolated environment rather than of their own weaknesses. They were saved by their innate broad qualities, by their recurrence to that closer communion with nature which has so often been the grace that has saved peoples. Such men may lose the gift, known to the courtier as charm, but so

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long as they retain their original vigor and pristine honesty, the finer quality is never so lost that opportunity does not revive or restore it.

The tendency of manual toil to repress the imagination or mental grasp has not been potent here by reason of the fact that the character of the people was too strong. Freed from the threat of the despot, the lash of the overseer, the greed of the landlord, the impulse of the mob spirit, and the spectacular, will-o'-the-wisp rewards which lure the gold-seeker, the ambition, energy, and outlook of the home-maker have preserved the mind and the heart even in the joys and sorrows, the hardships and triumphs of wilderness and prairie. It is a mistake to think of this American Pioneer life as primitive. It was plain and unpretentious; but in its essentials it included, in the potentialities of the one generation and the realities of its successors, the mental and moral impulses, the devotion to liberty and free institutions which were the component parts of the great life of the world. It was behind the time that was to come in individual bathtubs, in running water in houses, in intricate machinery, in artificial light and heat, and in other highly convenient developments, but was quite its equal in serious purpose and in the interest of its governing element among men and women in the best available things.

If they were provincial in the narrow sense in which this word is often used, if they were concerned mainly with the things around them, it is still difficult to find anywhere a people in whom this characteristic is not leading and

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dominant. It was not to be expected that they could see or foresee the devastation, the hate, the rancor, of the Civil War, then only a few years in front of them. But who did? Who even among the millions of their overwise successors saw or foresaw the Great War through which the world has just passed? Prophets do not seem to be over-plentiful whether they are sought on prairies or in woods, or in the most densely populated districts known to mankind. It is well to talk about vision : but suppose that, after all, it sees nothing!

It is common to pity these people for their isolation — forgetful of the fact that in this lay much of their strength. It was what they both wanted and needed. They would have resented the waste of time incident to modern society; would have shunned the purposeless movements that weaken individuals, tire out multitudes, and invite peril to ideas and institutions; they would have resented the idle chatter that makes so many people think themselves orators or conversationalists when, in reality, they have only the gifts common to the parrot, the town crier, or the auctioneer; they may have lacked the theatrical, but the drama of life with its varying comedy and tragedy unfolded itself for them and they saw it. Often they made it for themselves; if they did not talk overmuch about history they were not slow to do their part in its making; they did not have to pursue nature study as a fad because, by their intimate contact with the real thing, it was too familiar, too dear, to be merely written or talked about : not one of them had any more doubts about his own

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origin, or that of the earth, sun, and planets, of sea or stream, of fruit or flowers, of every clod or stone, of every blade of grass, or of the succession of the seasons, than he had of each blessing or curse that came to him. He did not presume to analyze or to question any of these; he simply accepted and enjoyed or shuddered, looking upon them as having been made for his use, or for his pleasure or punishment.

He accepted them all and was thankful. Like his countrymen, each had his share of that extra drop of nervous force which Higginson assigns to the American, and he used it to such advantage as he could; it was not given to him to do more. He and all these men did, indeed, plough a lonely furrow; the silence of a world surrounded them; without a field for the proper exercise of the thing called education, they had little of it; but with their faults, deficiencies, and oversights, they delighted in the work set for them and did it with a joy and enthusiasm seldom seen among men.



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THE INFLUENCE OF THE CIVIL WAR  
(I)





## THE GROWTH OF NATIONALITY

EMERGING from the simple surroundings the Pioneer region must hereafter be considered from a broader and different point of view. With the Presidential election of 1860 it was plunged into conditions wholly new and strange. Without premonition or preparation; without thought or will of its own; with no power to resist or to modify events; in the midst of an activity unexampled in its brief history; and with its temper and all its conquests so peaceful that it had never seriously thought enmity possible, it found itself thrown, all at once, into one of the most destructive civil wars known to men.

Its people had long been part of their common country and, together with their neighbors and associates everywhere, had prayed for peace; they themselves had been the creatures and the beneficiaries of compromised differences; they had deceived themselves and the world with their assurances of a permanent settlement of contentious questions raised by others; only to find that their hopes were futile, their prayers unanswered, and their assurances of brotherly good will only so many thick clouds which nothing could pierce or brighten.

The slow spread of the spirit of nationality in the United States is not always recognized or appreciated. It was very well to have a Federal government, but it was easy to forget that, instead of being something that had created it-

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self or fallen from the heavens, it was a machine made in response to a seemingly imperious necessity by the States themselves. Probably aside from Washington, Franklin, Madison, and Hamilton few of the men who made up the Convention of 1787, and almost none of the members of those separate bodies which, in the original thirteen States, ratified and accepted this instrument ever so much as suspected that they were making a machine which would in due time become a master, when to outward view and profession it was only meant to be the servant.

It was only natural that a people, accustomed during six generations to protect themselves and even without hindrance from the top to persecute others, with the habit as well as the necessity of looking out for their economic good or ill without either asking or giving help, should take a long time to learn the virtue of a larger association than that of the simple, powerless kind to which they had committed themselves. The patriotism that has both the ability and the intelligence to look out for distant associates and place them on an equality with itself is not developed in a day, or as the result of a seeming desire among some of its constituent numbers.

It was not long before insurrection broke out in Pennsylvania; and, even thirty years after the adoption of the Constitution, the Hartford Convention made a studied, though happily an unsuccessful attempt to involve New England in a separation movement. Even that closing of the lips of Chief Justice Marshall's relentless vise was not able to avert the demonstration that South Carolina made

## The Growth of Nationality

in the days of nullification. These movements showed how strong were the cords which bind men to an accustomed provincialism and how weak the Union seemed to be outwardly. The time had not yet come when commercial routes were so much stronger than neighborhood sentiment that they forged the unbreakable chain of Union.

In the Pioneer area, Union was not only a necessity but its people had never known anything else. Its new Commonwealths, as they were formed, were the children of the Federal Constitution. Under its workings they had organization and their people protection. They were not compelled wholly to fight their own battles as Vincennes under the Confederation and later Tippecanoe and the Thames under the Constitution well attested. As they had no experience or knowledge of monarchy, and knew nothing of the strong jealousies that had torn the thirteen colonies, so as children of the Union dependent upon it for protection to life and property and upon its restless population for recruits, they came to know it as a fostering mother and were attached to it accordingly. In a strict sense, the party words, "Federalist" and "Republican", never crossed the Alleghenies, the first strong stirrings of nationalism taking the place of old and dead names. Besides, the domination in national politics of Virginia favored the migration, overwhelmingly, of a population from the Southern and Middle States. The whole pioneer region became Jeffersonian, although it was not long before modifications of the dominating Virginia ideas began to develop.

## Pioneer Foundations

### TO FORM A MORE PERFECT UNION

THE settlements throughout the whole region were offshoots or branches of those in Tennessee and Kentucky made by men with the same motives, and the resulting character was the same. In each of these there came to the front at almost the same time two leaders who, destined to be lifelong rivals, were as one in that almost fanatical attachment to the Union which from their earliest common activities marked the careers of Andrew Jackson and Henry Clay. Each, in his way, thought of little else; and this agreement in motive, however marked the difference in method, continued during the nearly half a century of work and influence that remained to them in common. In reality (though outwardly in rivalry even at enmity) they fixed the sentiment of the new States that grew out of the early settlements. West of the Alleghenies, whether it took the form in one case of a grapple with nullification or in the other the successful effort to prevent disruption by the enactment of the Missouri Compromise, the effect was the same. There was never a suggestion of understanding and coöperation between them; but if they and their adherents had met every day as sworn friends their efforts could not have been more effective in creating the spirit of a Union, unbroken and unbreakable.

Thus the patriotism of the earlier days became so ingrained that the Kentucky Resolutions would not have been possible after the early years of the nineteenth century when the center of political gravity was gradually shifting along with the center of population. It was a natural

## To Form a More Perfect Union

growth as men pushed their way into the wilds of forest or prairie. State and neighborhood pride did indeed remain; but it was soon found that this was not inconsistent with the larger devotion to the Federal Union. The intense opposition to Great Britain that had developed in these young settlements, then took the opposite form of passionate attachment to the central government which was the logical outcome of the War for Independence.

These people dated everything from this first war with Great Britain. For them, there was none of that formative political period of nearly two hundred years which had fixed the character of colonial growth. When compared with this war, even their own stern contests with nature and savages took on a secondary importance; while its successor, in which they bore such a creditable part, gave them the very exaggeration of patriotic devotion to the Union which had been created out of the first armed conflict and preserved as the result of the second. That this attachment had in it truculent features was only natural in a people assembled upon new scenes with few large issues to engage their attention; but its effects upon themselves and its reflex influence upon the whole country so struck their imagination that no disunion movement (even that early fiasco of Burr which so nearly affected them geographically that it might well have made its appeal) was able to shake their allegiance.

The Pioneer was able, too, to escape from that recrudescence of the Puritan traditions which began about 1820 and was carried on with an intensity worthy of more

## Pioneer Foundations

modern methods for agitation and propagandism. The Pioneer was not to be turned aside from his work by a movement of which only the echoes reached him. The birth of the literary gift which produced as its first result a group of writers and orators who did not acquire much influence in these remote regions so long as almost nobody came out from New England to help in the one thing needful: the great work of material conquest. So, the settler went along with his narrow religious manifestations and his imperfect educational system in the long run losing much. But he still preserved his traditional political ideas and held to his conceptions of duty to the whole country.

The one idea which during this period moved the Pioneer outside his own immediate concerns and needs was the Union. "Our Federal Union: it must be preserved" of Jackson thus links itself in the most direct way with Lincoln's later declaration, "My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union." One is the corollary of the other, and both were the logical conclusions of the Pioneer genius.

It was this ingrained idea that in the end was so to buttress the Union with the support that would secure it from destruction; it is this influence that I desire to consider in the space which I shall give to the consideration of its work in the war which finally came to test the fabric woven in the Northwest Ordinance of 1787. And yet, the strange thing back of this idea is that until 1861 the Federal government was so remote from these people that it was little more than an abstraction. Accustomed to pro-

## To Form a More Perfect Union

tect themselves, they had so little idea of the actual or potential military power of the Federal government that probably not one in a hundred thousand of the entire population had ever seen the blue coat of a regular soldier. The Mexican War, closed nearly a half a generation before, had been simple and short-lived. The numbers engaged were small; and the survivors so sank back into the duties of citizenship that the raising and the achievements of the quickly disbanded army were almost as unconscious as the breathing of the air.

A case in the Federal courts from these new States was for long an almost unheard of event. There was no national currency, and the coins bearing the government superscription were few and hard to get. There were no income assessments or taxes, no internal revenue collectors, no pension agents, no bank examinations, no direct knowledge of the customs taxes, no serious interference by Federal office-holders in local or State politics, no civil service reform or examinations, few railroads and no Interstate Commerce Commissions, and no secret agents or the almost thousand and one agencies by which the central government is now exploited. Even a Presidential election, though nominally national, was then in reality as it still remains in name an affair of State law and direction. Practically the only agency which announced the presence of the general government was the mail carrier on his route from one county to another, or the primitive post office because even then there was not in 1861 a dozen postmen in the ten States of the West. Certainly, if Jef-



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erson's maxim be true that "That is the best government which governs least", its illustration is found in the conditions then existing, not only among the people of these thinly-peopled communities but throughout the entire country.

### COMPLETE LACK OF PREPAREDNESS

IT HAS been almost impossible in dealing with the Civil War to follow the course of events to its logical results. No man who was neither in it nor of it can know the whole truth and most of those thus close to it have been deterred by one motive or another from the attempt. There have been an endless procession of treatises on its strategy (the what of warfare) and criticisms akin in number to the sands of the seashore about its tactics (the when or how of the military art) of this or that general; and in many cases the difference between those great plans which make the former, and that routine execution which entered into the latter, are sadly confused.

When the war began, the absence of readiness on one side or the other was about equal. Even the persistent representation that John B. Floyd, Secretary of War under Buchanan, had sent all the good arms and munitions South did not survive when James Ford Rhodes subjected it to analysis. The same was true of the relative number of West Point graduates who took the Southern side. It has long been clear that, if anything, the North had much the better of it even in comparison to population, though perhaps by the action of Robert E. Lee, Thomas

## Complete Lack of Preparedness

J. (Stonewall) Jackson, Albert Sydney Johnston, and Joseph E. Johnston, it was rather outclassed in quality during the opening months, or until the distinctive military leaders of the North could be called back—men who like Grant and Sherman had passed into civil life for which so many more opportunities presented themselves than in the South.\*

The regular army, though small, had, perhaps, everything considered, as high an order of efficiency as at any time in its history or in any army in the world whatever its size. Since the establishment of the Military Academy, where the method of selection was as rigid as the training, the quality of the American regular army left little to be desired. It was so small that it had been kept almost wholly free from the two elements that are the bane of military establishments: party and female influence. It was, therefore, able through its methods of selecting cadets to command the best the country had. In this condition, it plunged into the Civil War; and with such high usefulness, its members on both sides made and maintained its record and prestige during the successive campaigns of four years.

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\* The strength of the Regular Army of the United States on April 1st, 1861, was 1,074 officers, and 16,507 enlisted men. A list of the officers of the Regular Army, 283 in number, who resigned after November 1st, 1860 and joined the Confederate Army is shown in Heitman's *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army*, Vol. II, pages 180-184. At the outbreak of the Civil War, the enlisted men of the United States Army, with few exceptions, remained loyal to the United States Government.—Letter to the author from General P. C. Harris, Acting Adjutant General, September 21, 1918.

## Pioneer Foundations

In the Civil War the difficulty lay much deeper. It was more than unpreparedness that had to be met : it was the decline of the military spirit to such a degree that it was nearly extinct. From the James, the Merrimac, and the Hudson, to the Tennessee, the Kentucky, and the Wabash, in early days the organized company was always ready for an emergency whether it was the fighting of Indians, English, or French, and the annual muster day remained one of the few recognized and observed holidays. Even against the opposition of that convinced truculent pacifist, the Quaker, Pennsylvania somehow managed to defend herself from aggression or to afford some protection to the settler on its then remote frontiers. The arms were simple and primitive in keeping with the time; but the knowledge of how to use them, the courage, the neighborliness, and the local patriotism, were so strongly developed that a call for volunteers was everywhere answered without delay or question; and the spirit of real discipline, difficult as it was to arouse, was still sufficient to produce effective drill.

After Tecumseh and his ambitious, far-reaching confederacy came to a delayed but foredoomed failure, this discipline fell into disuse. With the removal of danger from the Indian, the military spirit became dormant. Working along the well recognized lines of least resistance, there seemed to be no good reason for maintaining costly methods of training or for giving time and attention to perils which remained only as memories. So the militia company passed out of existence and the picturesque muster day fell into disuse. The most serious tendency of all followed as the

## Complete Lack of Preparedness

sense of discipline, the willingness to submit to authority, also declined. The farther west the Pioneer went, the more assertive and independent he became in this matter of submitting his will to that of another.\* He was no less loyal than before to society but coöperation with his neighbor took on new forms. With this spirit the blood-thirstiness which for generations had prompted the killing of Indians, whether it was either necessary or politic, and the old-time personal recklessness wore themselves out because there was no longer anything to prompt them.

As a result of these new developments in the spirit of the Pioneer, or rather in his needs, probably no people in history has been less fitted to enter upon a civil war (one of those wasting contests that rack civilization) than those

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\* The behavior of these raw levies . . . shows that they require a long discipline before they are fit for the routine endurance of the soldier. Even when fresh from their homes they can be trusted to take punishment and to strike hard blows; but they have too much individuality to stand the continued trials of the march. They have been too much accustomed to be a law unto themselves to make them patient in the dull round of toil which makes up the life of the soldier until they have been well and carefully disciplined.—N. S. Shaler's *Kentucky*, p. 163.

The frontier virtue of independence and of impatience of outside direction found a particularly vicious expression in the frontier abhorrence of regular troops, and advocacy of a hopelessly feeble militia system . . . which they loudly proclaimed to be the only proper mode of national defence. While in the actual presence of the Indians the stern necessities of border warfare forced the frontiersmen into a certain semblance of discipline . . . but in the days of peace the men who had taken part in Indian fighting cared but little to attend the musters, and left them more and more to be turned into mere scenes of horseplay.—Theodore Roosevelt's *The Winning of the West* (Standard Library Edition), Vol. IV, pp. 245, 246.

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of the West in the spring of 1861. It had a devotion to the Union that was beyond question and probably stronger than that found anywhere else. But, in the absence of formal organization, with the ingrained fear of standing armies that had long been deeply seated in the race, with practically no formal companies or regiments, with a stray rude policeman, with only an occasional demand for even a posse comitatus, there was little from the mountains to the Missouri and Tennessee rivers to remind any man that he had to defend himself or his neighbors from assault. It was the happy hunting ground of the sheriff and the constable without much more for either to do than assert an authority that almost maintained itself. So, as each company volunteered, panoplied round about by a loyalty and an enthusiasm that were wholly admirable in intention, it was a body military in form but without a natural or recognized head. There were neighborhood leaders in plenty (men respected for their high qualities), but as more than twenty-eight per cent of the prospective Federal armies was to be made up of boys between eighteen and twenty-two and sixty per cent of it of men under twenty-five there was little military call for the prominent citizens who, whatever their zeal and patriotism, had passed the fatal age of thirty-five or forty.

As to the material for the higher officers necessary to plan and direct operations, nothing could have been more fortunate than the Mexican War. Narrow and petty as that contest had been, discreditable though it was in inception and purpose, it yet brought opportunity and ex-

## How Volunteer Officers Were Chosen

perience to as competent a small group of young men as any nation ever found among its defenders. It first showed what West Point as a military school could do. The story of the Civil War, on both the Union and Confederate sides, is told in the long list of volunteers who, having come out of political mismanagement in the conduct of the Mexican War, had had a practical military experience in their earliest days of service. In 1861 they were mostly around forty or forty-five years of age. It is true that many of them failed; but when compared with that sad tale of volunteer and political inefficiency, in which so many well-meaning persons placed their trust, the strategy and the tactics of the struggle between 1861 and 1865 reflect the highest credit upon our people whether Federal or Confederate.

### HOW VOLUNTEER OFFICERS WERE CHOSEN

BUT there is another side to the story. The Mexican War had closed fourteen years before, and of the 112,000 regulars, volunteers, and militia engaged in it probably more than half the survivors were then living in the ten States of the Pioneer area. The original contribution of the West had been fairly disproportionate to population, but the number living within its limits was swelled by many additional thousands who had been drawn from every direction because it was the only available northern territory then open in which 160-acre land warrants could be located. A large number of these men, mostly privates, were still under thirty-five years of age. As a rule they had prob-

## Pioneer Foundations

ably never thought or heard of tactics from the day of their honorable discharge until the call to arms came again. But, drill-masters must be found however closely they might be in kinship to the historic hay-foot, straw-foot order. So, while broomsticks and fork and hoe-handles were in plenty as a substitute for guns, the modest Mexican veteran private found himself all at once in high favor.

The system which permitted companies to choose their own officers remained in vogue during the first year or so, so that the confiding young neighbors who had enlisted proceeded to elect—nothing was known of any way of naming volunteer officers other than by vote—these soldiers of supposed experience to drill them and to lead them into battle afterwards. Among the early commissioned officers were some illiterates—men who could no more make or keep a company roster than they could perform any other impossible act. Others, indeed the majority, had almost no qualifications for leadership; so, these companies soon saw that by comparison with other and newer organizations they were getting no discipline worth the name; and they recognized still more clearly when they became parts of brigades in encampments that the method was a failure. It was natural that dissatisfaction should arise in the ranks and among the people as rapidly as these deficiencies became known.

Another element, akin to the choice of Mexican veterans, was the preference for a good many Germans and some Hungarians who, having seen service in the wild revolutionary movements of the 1848 period were at least

## How Volunteer Officers Were Chosen

thought to come up to the Dogberry standard of being "the most senseless and fit" for military preferment. It was overlooked that these men were not only privates but either unwilling soldiers in a system of universal service or in rebellion against authority. They had additional qualifications for assuring quick failure by the fact that they were foreigners, when the American of that day was little inclined either to welcome, obey, or even respect any other than a native. These latter experiments soon demonstrated that the foreign element might do very well in the ranks, but was generally a failure when given authority, however small, over mixed organizations.

During the first two years there were so many changes in company officers that if there had been anything other than an almost universal inefficiency the demoralization would have been complete. Gradually something like order came out of the almost universal chaos, but the over-rapid promotion of privates to fill so many vacancies also had in it elements of danger. The net result of these methods of seeking military leaders among the junior commissioned officers, was by the bloody process of killing off by bullets and disease some thousands of fine young privates while waiting for the elusive gift of leadership. The indiscipline was, of course, the most serious of all drawbacks; but if, from the beginning, officers below the rank of major could have been found, men worthy of confidence, the men in the ranks would have responded to kind but firm treatment and have made themselves into an efficient army in at least half the time actually consumed.



## Pioneer Foundations

### BEGINNINGS AND GROWTH OF PARTISANSHIP

THE higher organization was weak in another direction. The newly gathered regiments hurried to the front in the first shock of arms, when patriotic sentiment was deeper and less showy than it soon became, were, in spite of the drawbacks mentioned, officered by men as fairly strong as each State or district could furnish. Neither some imagined military service, nor political position cut a figure in any large and determining way. They were the sensible, capable men of the time who, having done well all other work that came their way, were now ready and willing to do their best as soldiers. The fact was soon duly recognized that the country was engaged in a serious war and that talent and capacity for command were necessities. So, for a time, party politics and faction were almost stilled and from every State in the Pioneer region the best men were sought and given a fair chance to show what was in them; but, everywhere, after fifteen or twenty regiments had gone out from each State and the mass of active, selfish politicians realized that it brought some distinction as well as some profit to be a colonel, a lieutenant-colonel, or a major, the conditions changed, and it became a matter of course to seek these offices through the medium of the party in power — in other words, to make them part of the spoils of political victory.

Not only were the newer regiments commissioned almost wholly with partisans, but the older officers, whatever their alignment, fairly better qualified each month for their work, found themselves passed over by juniors

## Beginnings and Growth of Partisanship

or incompetents more ambitious for political than for military promotion, until the majority of the new brigadier-generals, colonels, and lieutenant-colonels no longer represented the best men available for the prosecution of the war to a victorious end. In some States the conditions were worse than in others, but none in the Pioneer area escaped from the prevailing demoralization until favoritism, sometimes personal but more often partisan, became a fixed element in the granting of commissions by Governors who, chosen originally for peace duties and not for those of war, soon put themselves at the head of the party machinery coming just then by reason of the wide distribution of new authority and increased pay into a meaning and force which these people had never before known. Everywhere, in Federal, State, or county offices, thousands of men using the opportunities they suddenly discovered, adopted as their motto Strafford's "Thorough" and applied it relentlessly within the limits of their power. Human ingenuity was at once taxed to the utmost to make new plans for aggression, either political or financial — something that could be turned to personal advantage. There were honorable exceptions and many of them, although the proportion who were honest, competent, and unselfish was small.

Endless eulogies have been pronounced upon the so-called war governors, but in this great region of the loyal West which first and last furnished directly and indirectly one-half of the armies of the Union, there is no known exception to the conclusion that every one was laying

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wires for the succession to himself, or for election to the United States Senate. In many cases attainment of the latter was long deferred but the remoter the satisfaction of each aspiration, the more time these men had in which to demoralize the military service. When the situation is analyzed in the light of history practically only two of these much lauded Governors (Andrew of Massachusetts and Curtin of Pennsylvania) are at all worthy of the praise lavished upon them.

Morton of Indiana was active, but he was driven by a reckless personal ambition and a sinister character into the most serious excesses — acts which, if his career as Governor is massed with his later service as Senator, put him outside the pale of serious consideration in the high court of history.

Generally speaking they were nobodies, well-meaning in the days of peace when lines of activity were well defined and powers small, but wholly unfitted either in character or attainments for the new times that tried men's souls. Often they were opportunists who appealed to the hate and radicalism which soon dominated the period. They had enough ability to give expression to the rancor of the day, to suspect every man who uttered a word of criticism, or even asked a question that did not square with the new interpretations dictated by force. In the whole list of Pioneer war Governors from Ohio, West, North, or South, not one showed the tact, the diplomacy, or the unselfishness that recognized the new hard conditions which had suddenly developed and had led to war. None

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of these men seemed to have the gift or the desire to smooth down differences or adjust clashing ideas, or knew how best to meet a great crisis. The speeches and actions of these officers, all at once multiplied many times over in power as well as in number, were thrown into the super-heated caldron of hate, with results that did not even begin seriously to disappear until a full score of years had passed after the struggle at arms ended.

It is thus almost impossible to understand, without having seen it, the extent to which the Civil War after the elections of 1862 became political, or to realize the shamelessness with which party was used for personal or narrow purposes. This was perhaps shown more strikingly in the Pioneer region than anywhere else because passions there had gradually become more thoroughly centered in partisanship than anywhere else. The fundamental differences between the parties then existing never had had much force. Federalism had never been more than a torso, and the original republicanism of Jefferson, which disappeared in the days of the younger Adams, did not even become a democracy as it tended to do in the older parts of the Union. It was succeeded by Jacksonism, more a personal than a political creed, which never lost its hold or permitted the growth of a real opposition. The Whig party was an anomaly in that it was never able to pull itself into power under its leader.

Whatever it might do, Henry Clay, the natural foil of Andrew Jackson but in reality his enforced lieutenant in the creation and maintenance of Union sentiment, was

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never able to make either himself or his ideas dominant. Looked at from a personal point of view, he was the most attractive figure thus far seen in our political life, but the sturdiness of character of Jackson, the unreasoning idolatry, the high place the latter filled in the popular imagination, could never be overcome. Clay's services to the Union, great as they were, could never be capitalized. While he could preach with a charm never known before or since, Jackson had the official sanction, the unified sentiment, and the truculence that fitted into his time. It was both difficult and very well to be the architect of the Missouri Compromise and to devise and support every other measure or idea that would discourage disunion; but these were after all only merged into the power wielded by Jackson in the nullification crisis. So, no real opposition to the strong personal party was possible of organization until four years after Clay's death; and even this was doomed to failure before the people of the whole country in spite of a more favorable reception in the Pioneer region than in any other great section.

### CHANGES IN PARTY ALIGNMENT

As a result the Republican party came into power with a legal and an electoral majority but in a decided popular minority, with an unknown, untried leader who was at once brought face to face with problems requiring substantial unity and an understanding as complete as popular government makes possible. Lincoln had these gifts in a high degree; but in the very nature of the case he was as

## Changes in Party Alignment

lacking in popular understanding as he was in the executive experience which counts for so much as giving confidence in a great crisis. He was pulled and hauled in every direction and had practically little really unselfish help. His party was new, raw, and undisciplined, without cohesion, with no unity between any two States, without any general sense of responsibility. With all these drawbacks, it faced secession. With one or two exceptions (probably Seward and Welles), the Cabinet officers chosen were ambitious State politicians, accustomed to bend to every passing wind of doctrine, timid, without commanding ability, having the power of utterance but without voices that could penetrate to the whole people. As a natural effect both Lincoln and his official advisers were lost in the indecision, the inefficiency, and the intellectual cowardice and dishonesty of their time.\* This was not an encouraging state of the public mind when brought face to face with the insurgents who, weak as they were, knew what they wanted and seldom failed to act as a unit.

But the response of the North, even to the discordant appeal made to it by a heterogeneous series of leaders, was marked by a unanimity probably unparalleled in the history of civil wars. This great section (no longer a section but a country) driven though it had been by false leaders,

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\* "It is an unexampled experience that we are having now, and a striking development of the democratic principle, of great historic deeds being accomplished, and moral principles working out their results, without one great man to do the deeds or to manifest the principle in himself." *Letters of Charles Eliot Norton*, Vol. I, pp. 243-244.

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lectured by fanatics, and led by insincere politicians practically rose as one man. Without regard to former opinion or affiliation, Democrats, Republicans, Americans, even the majority of the professional abolitionists, outside the noisy and the noisome, all at once echoed the time-honored cries of Jackson and Clay and their followers for the Union. They flocked into the Federal armies as if they had always been members of a single, compact body; the best men took their places automatically as natural leaders in their several neighborhoods; they responded with taxes freely levied and contributions cheerfully paid; they turned over to the Federal government the machinery of States, counties, and townships until in 1863 it was impossible in every State in the North to decide whether these composite armies, thus hastily and voluntarily mobilized, contained Democrats or Republicans in the greater number. By this time hesitation had almost disappeared, many of the original weak officials had been retired either into private life or their natural nothingness, and best and most necessary of all a leader had been developed and recognized in Lincoln, so that the nation had fairly found itself.

It was just at this time that narrow and petty politics asserted itself in party contests. It was then that the politicians, everywhere, probably more especially in the Pioneer region, started in to turn this mighty struggle for life into an orgy. In the Union itself, in the management of the army from the top, in the control of regiments, battalions, and companies down in the States, in the choice of officers from lieutenants to generals, in the award of

## Changes in Party Alignment

contracts, in all the civil relations, even down into proscription in private life, the lowest and meanest of methods were attempted at every turn, often with apparent success. The smaller contests, the voting of soldiers in camp or field, the appointment of recruiting and drilling officers, the interference with elections, national, State, or local, was given over almost uniformly to the most truculent of partisans. No place was so small as to be overlooked. No State was too insignificant to attract the selfish attention of some faithful tool. No Democrat, whether he was fighting in the ranks or at the head of a company, battery, battalion, regiment, brigade, or corps, or serving in public life, or doing useful loyal work down in his neighborhood, was free from suspicion if for a moment he hesitated to proclaim his support of such methods, or if in even the most remote of times or places he expressed the simplest doubt of the wisdom not of Lincoln or Stanton or the general government, but of even the smallest official, military or civil, under whose influence or jurisdiction he might come or be placed.

Freedom of speech if it was directed in the mildest way against a policy or an official, however high the character of the protestant or critic, was subject to the distorted report of a jealous or zealous chance eavesdropper, or the espionage of an official or voluntary spy. This spirit and its resulting acts ran down into the smallest neighborhoods and even sought to turn one member of a family against another. If there was anywhere a turncoat from any minority party (and this was one of the strongest ten-



## Pioneer Foundations

dencies of the time) he was the worst of offenders against his old associates, so that the terrorism incident to the forgotten days of religious persecution never furnished a precedent that was not emulated or followed in detail.

### THE UNION WAS MAINTAINED

IN SPITE of all these crimes against liberty and decency the cause of the Union finally won; but at a cost both material and moral that can never be calculated. That Lincoln could have stopped these methods is as distinctly true as it is to say that Hastings or Clive, Napoleon or Kaiser Wilhelm could have prevented the crimes and atrocities incident to their work or activities. He was distinctly human and ambitious beyond the limits of most men raised to power in a modern republic. He was well-meaning, self-centered, lacking in resolution until resolution was forced upon him, living a lonely, almost a desolate life, with little more of insight into the future than the partisan usually has, availing himself, generally unwillingly, of the advice and the help that he always distrusted and feared, doing sometimes what he could, but mostly what he thought he must, he would no more have expected to be turned into the modern myth that he has become than he would have nominated himself for a demi-god. He was a very human, well-meaning man, of large moral and mental proportions, entrusted with great power in a period vital to the history of mankind. It was his fortune, after all, to illustrate Lord Roseberry's terrible judgment about England and thus to "muddle through somehow."

## The Union Was Maintained

As illustrative of the unfair and unrelenting partisanship of the war period which was everywhere the same, I print herewith as a note, a letter written in 1864 by a chairman of a party committee in New Hampshire to an army officer in New York.\* The writer of the letter was William E. Chandler, then a young man, whose close relations to politics were to bring him in the course of a long and busy life to the position for nearly four years of Secretary of the Navy and a full term in the United States Senate from his native State. The letter, the original of which I have seen, is printed here from a copy certified and sworn to before a notary.

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\* Office Republican State Committee,  
Concord, New Hampshire,  
February 17th, 1864.

*Confidential*

My dear Colonel,

We are having a close political contest in New Hampshire and shall save the state by the aid of soldier's votes.

The two companies of Heavy Artillery at Fort Constitution, in this state, are nearly all republican and we want them to go and vote while the Copperheads and minors stay to man the guns; in fact we shall lose several close towns without them. Captain Long has now no authority to furlough his men. We want him to have authority to furlough them from four to ten days, in his discretion.

We may ask you to see General Dix and arrange the matter at once. General Dix revoked Long's power to furlough a short time ago but when he understands the object will, I think, do what we want.

This matter is very important and I trust to hear from you immediately; as if we do not get the order from General Dix we shall endeavor to get it from Secretary Stanton or "Old Abe." You will see many soldiers dropping home to see us within the next 3 weeks. Help them all you can.

Yours truly,

To Col. Frank E. Howe,  
New York.

[SIGNED]

W. E. Chandler  
Chairman of Committee

## Pioneer Foundations

It was only by the effort of all, even of those who were flouted and discouraged, that the thing called the Union was saved. It was by the sacrifice and unselfish devotion of the mass rather than by the wisdom and patriotism of the few. It was fitting that nearly one-half of all the soldiers of the Union should be drawn from the Pioneer region and its younger offshoots which ninety years before this crisis came was only a wilderness void of civilization or even the rudest settlement.\* Too much emphasis has been placed upon the fact that the foundations of this great area were laid in districts where slavery was introduced along with the original settlers. Slaves were indeed carried into Kentucky and Tennessee and later across the great river into Missouri, but they were little more than slaves in name. They were few in number, and the institution they represented was of the mildest order. Whites fought and conquered the Indians, built the houses, felled the forests, explored and settled new districts, navigated the mighty rivers, and their tributaries, formed rude but useful systems of education, introduced and maintained religious services, established law and order, and performed all the duties and functions that made for civilization and the slow progress incident to patience and time.

While these States had in them black bondmen they were in and of themselves as distinctly the product of

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\* I do not, of course, forget that a few French adventurers and traders had lived in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Missouri, but they had less than nothing to do with the final conquest of the Pioneer area, upon whose development they were a drag.

## The Course of the Opposition Party

freedom as were the districts north of the Ohio which had been formally devoted to freedom by the Ordinance of 1787. So strong was this sentiment, even after three generations had passed, that only one of these States was partially drawn into the vortex of secession and it was the first to redeem itself and to supply to the country a man who, although not elected to the Presidency, succeeded to it under the law, and was destined to furnish an example of a high order and to do much to preserve our institutions in their original character and simplicity. Whatever else Kentucky and the territory south of the Ohio and Missouri rivers were or have done they were at least the creation of white men.

### THE COURSE OF THE OPPOSITION PARTY

THE opposition party, so far as the great policy inherent in the war was concerned, practically disappeared when Sumter was attacked. Stephen A. Douglas, narrow and ambitious though he had been, whose whole life had been devoted to the Union threw himself heart and soul into its cause. He made no terms, asked no recognition for himself or his followers, but until his premature death, only a few weeks later, gave his energy, his abilities, his great prestige, as freely as if the responsibilities of the nation had been thrown into his hands. Leading Democrats everywhere raised companies, formed regiments, accepted their assignments with a discipline and obedience that connoted the spirit of the soldier rather than that of the citizen. Many of the supporters of John C. Breckin-

## Pioneer Foundations

ridge, in spite of the fact that their leader had promptly entered the Confederate army and that, too, without the excuse of Lee, Jackson, and others, that he must follow his State, took their places in the Union ranks ready to serve wherever placed. The same was true of the supporters of John Bell and Edward Everett who had been the candidates of the Constitutional Union party. All over the North they rallied to the support of their government and its distinctive ideas.

In short, party activities almost disappeared among the various elements and forces which, only a few weeks before, had been engaged in a Presidential contest of unexampled bitterness. During 1861 and in 1862, until the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, this unity was practically undisturbed. By this time, however, proscription was in the air; in the public mind the issue had been changed by the injection unfairly and unnecessarily, of emancipation which until this time had been treated as an excuse but not as a reason for civil war. From this time forward the spirit of the North, if it did not change, at least wavered, and doubts arose lest the whole purpose of the conflict had been shifted. From then onward to the end party effort was resumed, conventions became critical, men asked questions, and there was division as to methods and purposes; but back of it all the real unity of purpose remained. Democrats in Congress voted supplies, condemned the rebellion in conventions and in public utterances, and showed loyalty to the government as before.

But it was the same idea with a difference. They no

## The Course of the Opposition Party

longer accepted everything without asking questions simply because it came from Washington. They instituted inquiries about the conduct of the war, resented the treatment of some commanders, and forced the removal or resignation of others. It was this criticism, moderate for the most part but firm and loyal, that finally compelled an entire change of policy and mobilized the resources and the support necessary to push their operations forward to success. Two of the generals were drawn from the Pioneer area and the absolute assurance of their fairness and freedom from partisanship did more to insure a really vigorous prosecution of the war than all other influences together.

As the result of these changes in the fundamentals of policy, the sinister influence among extreme Democrats came out. There were more of these extremists in Indiana and southern Illinois than in all the other Pioneer States together. There some small proportion of the population, mainly of the second order of settlers, had been drawn from the South within a comparatively recent period. They had maintained relations with old friends across the Ohio River, and thus shared, in some degree, their beliefs and sentiments. Some crossed the lines and entered the Confederate service. These were, of course, open traitors and caused no more apprehension than any other men in arms; but they left behind them a few others whose sympathies lay in the same direction. Nowhere was the number large or their standing important, but still there were enough to discourage enlistments and later when the drafts came to offer mild resistance occasionally; but, for the most

## Pioneer Foundations

part, the secret societies, one of the curses so common to humanity and always so dear especially to the American heart, held their meetings in secluded and mysterious places. When these were discovered the noise and excitement about them was raised to the highest pitch by an exaggeration which a few years of time and some attempts to get at the facts of genuine history showed how much matter a little fire kindleth.

Oliver P. Morton no doubt made his way to the United States Senate as a result of these exaggerations, aided by the use of the civil and military power lodged in his hands. On the whole, however, it is probably much to be doubted whether any great revolutionary movement was ever carried on in one part of a great country which aroused so little sympathy in other and related parts. Probably no civil war has ever been conducted in which the people of opposing sections were so solidly arrayed on geographical lines against each other as in the American Civil War. Even the most unrelenting partisanship was never able to fix upon any part or considerable class the stigma that long clung to the Tories in the War of Independence period.

### MISTAKES ABOUT THE SLAVERY AGITATION

FEW exaggerations have been more persistent or ill-founded than those dealing with the scope and vogue of the abolition movement.\* It was narrow to a limit that the historic, which seldom catches up with the legendary, will never

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\* "There is very little moral mixture in the 'anti-slavery' feeling in this country. A great deal is abstract philanthropy; part is

## Mistakes About the Slavery Agitation

deal with adequately. Posterity is so little interested in the truth about any successful agitation that few readers any longer care to realize that this one was the product of a small, almost insignificant, fraction of the whole people finally involved in it. The Pioneer area was typical of this want of general interest in emancipation. In the North there was little opposition to slavery as an institution, little interest in it, and practically only small knowledge of its workings. Its existence was universally deprecated by the mass just as it had been by Washington, Jefferson, and the fathers of the republic even in the South where only it could be conducted with an apparent though never a real economic profit.

The Methodists in one of their branches split upon the question, as in a mild academic way the Presbyterians did later; but the Baptists and the Campbellites, who represented so large a proportion of the active religious workers of the South and West, did not make this question a serious cause of offense or difference. The historic denominations, other than Congregationalism, which cut a small figure in the Pioneer life were little concerned about it, their adherents having a measure of patience which enabled them to look forward to the peaceful settlement of all national difficulties. Even the small number of persons who helped the escaping slave forward on his journey were mostly the adherents of one church, the Methodists, assist-

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hatred of slave-holders; a great part is jealousy for white labor; very little is a consciousness of wrong done, the wish to right it." —Letter from George William Curtis to C. E. Norton, August 19, 1861.



## Pioneer Foundations

ed by a small contingent of Quakers. The Pioneers were little inclined to be noisy, to proclaim either their acts or their opinions from the housetops, or to heap gratuitous abuse upon slaveholders. Nor did they take much occasion during the war to emphasize the demand for immediate emancipation, their general and consistent attitude being that of Lincoln who regarded the saving of the Union as the one solution, the one thing needful, in the belief that once this was done slavery would disappear naturally and in comparative peace perhaps by purchase as indeed the President proposed.

The leader of the principal force in making and fixing sentiment on the slavery question in the Pioneer region was Horace Greeley with his constant preaching about its injustice and inefficiency and his admonitions about the possibility of a peaceful settlement, rather than by William Lloyd Garrison's intemperate denunciation of the Constitution as "a covenant with death and an agreement with hell."

The most effective assaults upon slavery were those of Hinton R. Helper in *The Impending Crisis*, and the careful surveys made by Frederic Law Olmsted in his remarkable books of travel through the South. These showed the economic failure of a servile system of industry and thus made their appeal to that practical side upon which the American has always prided himself. They had a profound influence upon the South itself — an influence which was far-reaching when the armed conflict was finally precipitated. They showed the North that it need have no

## The Failure of the Orator

fear, in the long run, of a revolt so seriously handicapped in the fundamental necessities for the hopeful conduct of war. These men had the knowledge and the foresight to put their fingers on the real weakness of the South, the substance that lay below the froth of loud talk, the boastfulness incident to arrogance, and the mischievous ambitions of the assumed leaders of the slave power.

### *THE FAILURE OF THE ORATOR*

THE least effective efforts made against slavery were those of the extreme abolitionists, the violence of John Brown, and the later fulminations of the clergy. In spite of the great output of oratory on the question of slavery, there does not remain for us, sixty years after the struggle ended, a single great speech, address, or oration upon this question. The same is true of the like contest in England. It is in the very nature of the case that real orators are not drawn into the consideration of such questions. The work must fall to an order of mind in which no great rhetorical and philosophical qualities are needed or possible. There is too much sentimentalism involved to make it possible to interest men permanently. The effort involved is for the moment. Its purpose is to move the impulses of hearers. So, in spite of the traditions nothing of Wendell Phillips, or Garrison, or Frederick Douglass has survived the destructiveness incident to war or the tooth of time; and the period since the conflict has seen them expelled or omitted even from those cheap anthologies of oratory current at the time and for a few years after.

## Pioneer Foundations

Even the public men, like Stevens, Sumner, Hale, Seward, or Chase, have left nothing upon this question that can or will or ought to survive. It so fell out that the men who carried on the work, Lincoln and others, had never had temptation or occasion to agitate violently for it, as with them it was only an incident in the larger interests of a broad political movement. So while there are outstanding oratorical triumphs in the separation from England, in the opposition to nullification, in the saving of the Union, and even in the settlement of great financial issues, there are none in the slavery agitation.

There was in the prevailing opinion no tendency to violence, no ingrained passion but a sublime confidence in the power of our institutions to correct abuses and work practical justice without resort to war. So, the existing sentiment on the question did not seriously interfere with social, religious, or political coöperation, with regular and unwearied industry, nor with the welcome to settlers, come from where they might, or regardless of their opinions. The natural arrogance of the slaveholder and that tendency of the extremist to repent the sins of somebody else excited almost equal disgust. When between these two extreme elements war was fomented and then finally forced, the Pioneer was ready to defend the Union; but the immediate destruction of slavery was far from his purpose. As the question related to his own problems, it had settled itself peacefully in the Ordinance of 1787 so that he could only believe that somehow a similar solution of the larger problems would work itself out.

## The Power of Momentum

As a foil to the Southern sympathizer was the fact that only in a few cases did the louder among the abolitionists enter the army. In fact nothing but the hard knocks of an occasional defeat turned the more violent of them even into real friends of the Union. They had become so infected with the virus generated by Garrison and Phillips that they cared little for anything other than the violent and immediate extinction of slavery to which they had vowed themselves.

I shall have occasion later to deal with the reaction which came to these extremists in their relations with the negro — a reaction which has had far-reaching consequences upon the industry and politics of the last half century. To do this now would anticipate the period after the actual close of the war and deal with the reconstruction era only a small part of which falls within the time limits of my subject.

### THE POWER OF MOMENTUM

WITH all these drawbacks and conditions the success of the Union cause was the result of inherent morality and momentum. Genius or great talent did not greatly enter into the final verdict. Other than Lincoln, commanding statesmen far-seeing and imaginative and at the same time unselfish and patriotic did not come to the front in the North. Nor, from the beginning to the end, was any outstanding military genius developed there. If the great soldier had been a necessity the Union could never have hopefully set an army in the field after the first two years

## Pioneer Foundations

had passed because the genius of Lee and Jackson would have triumphed ere then. If these men had had even the share of material resources that belonged to them relatively to numbers the decisive events might never have waited until 1863 and the tale might have been different.

But the spirit came in time to save the Union or rather to enable the devotion and the unity of its people to save it. By this means, the conditions gradually changed. Its new power came less by the defeat of enemies, either internal or external, than by a recognition of its own inherent needs, by a gradual realization of the strength of its own forces. It was not so much the offspring of a revival of pure patriotism as the steady belief in the saving power of a great, centralized government and a recognition of the danger to mankind that lay in division with its incidental pettiness. By some unconscious process, the people of the United States, practically careless of the so-called moral issues supposed to lie in slavery, reached the conclusion that the destiny they had so long anticipated could only be worked out if they faced the future as a whole rather than as the scattered fragments of a race accustomed to conquest. So, from the middle of 1863 when in spite of a lame and almost impotent leadership they found themselves, the issue of secession or division was as effectually settled as it was by the surrender of Lee nearly two years later.

### *THE GREAT WORK IN CIVIL LIFE*

It was in civil life that the great body of patriotic and

## The Great Work in Civil Life

unselfish service was done during the Civil War. Thrown suddenly into new conditions, with what grew into an almost unanimous public sentiment for seeing their country through the contest thus forced upon them, there was a striking absence of knowledge of how to proceed, united to an unyielding purpose to carry through to the end. Nothing like a war which required general participation, outside as well as within the fighting forces, had been seen in the country for nearly a hundred years, and none within the Pioneer region. The military spirit was almost extinct, and the knowledge of war was so slight that there was nothing, not even in imagination, to guide the dweller on the edge of the geographical areas where fighting entered even into their thoughts.

So, while the sentiment of patriotism was general, ways of making it practical had to be devised. Naturally, the first necessity was the enlistment of soldiers—that mysterious process by which the civilian is turned from the ideas and practices incident to peace into the thoughts, feelings, and acts that enter into war. Any attempt to appraise the measure of patriotism that entered into the making of a volunteer army, especially this one, would be difficult and misleading. The surprise was so great that war had really come, the belief in all quarters that the revolt would soon break of its own weight and end in failure was so general, the hopefulness which is so large a force in the American make-up was so deeply rooted, that the earliest efforts were of necessity little more than tentative. It was not much of a job to embody, for a

## Pioneer Foundations

service of three months and from the very best elements in every American community the handful of seventy-five thousand volunteers called out for this "breakfast spell" of service. In the smaller Western States this meant a single regiment of infantry; and in the larger two, three, or four regiments with the necessary battery or so and some small contingents of cavalry. Probably no skeleton volunteer army ever enlisted was filled almost overnight with men of the naturally superior order found in those quickly improvised bodies.

There was then almost no partisanship, no partiality on account of religion, no idea except that manifested by responsible young men to give the best with which to do the country's work in an unexpected emergency. The same general conclusions apply to the second and third calls made by the President so that throughout the entire country probably four hundred thousand men were called and answered with no other motive than patriotic devotion. Their efficiency was imperfect, but that was the incident of a bad system. These men hurried themselves into camps, drilled with earnestness, if not with highest skill or the most willing discipline, and thus laid the foundation of the real army that was to come into existence by the middle of 1863, two full years later.

As call succeeded call the process of procuring recruits became more and more difficult, less because of the exhaustion of man power than from a variety of motives. Many tired of the war; many resented the presence and influence of party politics; and some were opposed to the

## Filling Community Quotas

intrusion of the negro question. As these difficulties increased, more and more lures were held out. States, counties, and townships vied with each other in offering bounties; pension systems began to creep in, timidly at first, only to reach their fruition many years later.

There was early begun the bestowal upon soldiers of civil offices: a policy which drew out many men from active service. Governorships, members of Congress, legislators, and a vastly increased number of appointive places were distributed with a liberality that foreshadowed a bad effect, so that many men used their army service for personal advancement. Thus early, too, soldiers were preferred for county, town, and local offices in general; so that within a few years soldier treasurers, auditors, sheriffs, school superintendents, and district attorneys had attained almost a monopoly of the elective places, while those which were appointive under Federal, State, and local authority were used more as rewards for partisan than for military service. This introduced a new element of demoralization which had the double effect of reducing the number of those available for active service and of encouraging the ambitious stay-at-homes to enlist for short service which, by means of resignation, was used for political ends thus increasing an order of competition that soon reached the danger point.

### FILLING COMMUNITY QUOTAS

AFTER the first burst of patriotic fervor had passed, the army became less and less attractive to the stronger men



## Pioneer Foundations

in each community. Even then they were denied the recognition for which they were fitted by the swarms of useless private soldiers remaining over from the Mexican War. Later, the prevailing political favoritism made the more serious-minded men hesitate to submit themselves to the existing processes of selection, and as the younger men reached military age there was more and more of hesitation. The filling of quotas was, therefore, left more to the lures of the bounty system and when these failed, to modified methods of conscription to which resort was had, so that, if there could have been a weighing and measuring of men with all the elements entering into merit thrown into the scale, it would have been clear that the quality of soldiers enlisted from the middle of 1863 to the end would have been revealed as distinctly lower than during the first two years of the war.

Another influence, potent in this reduction of the average of character, was the fact that as time went on the home work behind the lines, that service which did not lend itself to measurement by title, and that incident to the payment of taxes or any other public contributions, increased to a degree never thought of in the earlier days of the conflict. By this time, the number of men attracted into the army was so great that industry was everywhere crippled. Many of these men had just fairly started in life with small farms perhaps not entirely paid for, with improvements that were almost valueless if their own activity was suspended. As a result, many women were thrown entirely upon their own resources with young and

## How the Demands Were Met

helpless children for whom, without assistance, they could not possibly provide. There were no direct grants-in-aid from the Federal government, no regular provision by the States, no oversight of funds in the possession of local authorities. Under the American industrial system, which long before had become settled and time-honored, women knew nothing about work on the land and no demand existed in the new parts of the country for their labor in factories or other employments indoors.

### *HOW THE DEMANDS WERE MET*

THE burden of this work fell upon the active men who remained at home often because they were too old, or for physical reasons were disqualified for service. They had to manage their own affairs as usual. It was vital that they should keep production going because upon this depended the ability to supply the army and to meet the demands of a population constantly increasing rather than diminishing, as might have been expected by the exigencies of war. In every neighborhood throughout the Pioneer region these active, enterprising men not only performed their own duties, ploughing, sowing, planting, and harvesting their crops, but they assumed the task of cultivating most of the lands belonging to the absent soldiers. In many cases, they would take over as tenants some part of these farms, parcelling them among themselves in order that none might be neglected and paying in grain or in cash the rent which would enable the soldier's family to go on and, at the same time, increase their own responsibilities.

## Pioneer Foundations

In many cases, perhaps in as large a proportion as half, a whole neighborhood would turn out on fixed days to cultivate any farms overlooked in the ordinary processes of industry. Thus many a boy with the age for military service far in the future, worked extra hours and deprived himself of play, school, and rest to help some "war widow" (the name universally given to the married woman left at home) support herself and family and keep her little property together until the return of the husband and father. Such services, never recognized in any of the official categories of patriotism, were often no less efficient agencies in the conduct of the war than enlistment and service at the front.

Few modern wars have commanded so much really unrequited service from humble men who, having to stay at home, never expected reward or recognition, or even thought that they were doing anything more than a duty. Indeed, the Pioneer during his hundred years' march had been so accustomed to this that he would have disdained to think that he was doing anything unusual. It was looked upon more as neighborly than as patriotic. Nor was this helpfulness limited to the men. From their narrow resources the women provided clothing for the semi-orphans who surrounded them, made garments, knitted socks and comforters, provided delicacies for all needs, nursed the sick, went into houses to help in the home duties, bought textbooks for the children that they might attend school and did their part for their neighbors, besides extending their own activities as their husbands, fathers, sons, and brothers

## How the Demands Were Met

were doing, into every field that would bring help in this time of dire need. In no case was this looked upon as charity, or as done in any way other than what the highest delicacy would dictate or direct.

It was this unified effort that began after the first two years to produce momentum. As it required discipline and actual service to make an army, so it took time for these masses on the home lines to realize what had to be done and then so to organize themselves as to do it. A soldier might be made out of a conscript — in spite of the very serious doubt of this fact during the period under treatment — but nothing other than the most devoted spirit of voluntaryism could produce such results as were seen down among the American people. So much has been told of the great and worthy efforts of the Southern women to help in their time of need (and nothing can take from them their due meed) but the women of the Pioneer region did their part with a devotion and a courage quite worthy the more-vaunted work of the men, whether in the field or at home.

Thus, the spirit, the willingness to make sacrifices, and the devotion to ideals were far greater in the mass than were any of these qualities in the management of either civil government or armies. It was either true that the best qualities and results came out more effectually in the mass than it did in individuals, or that by some legerdemain the best did not get a chance to show itself in the more formal responsibilities incident to civil office or military power. Perhaps it was only an illustration of the old

## Pioneer Foundations

adage that everybody knows more than anybody, probably because in time of stress everybody is moved by the same spirit and so there is need and scope for all-round thinking. When this time came there was seldom any difficulty about leadership; it was as natural for somebody in each community to lead as it was for the majority to follow, and as the work was not of everybody's business order, it was done almost automatically and with a fair degree of acceptance.

### *THE OTHER SIDE*

BUT, as usual where human nature is involved, there was another side to the shield. There was the coward who, whether truthfully or not, was given upon his return to boasting that in battle he had shot in the back an officer whom he disliked or a fellow soldier with whom he had had a quarrel; there was the man whose patriotic fervor would carry him into enlistment but whose caution or greed prompted desertion; there was the class to whom bounty-jumping opened the doors as to a new profession; the old-time figure, known as the poltroon, who cut off his thumb to escape service, had his successor in the fellow who, under the rule of firearms, went farther and shot off his trigger-finger only to find often that he had been transferred to the control of the snare drum; there was the fellow who accepted it as a part of his soldierly duties to use his enlistment papers as an opportunity to desert his family; there was the soldier's wife who, the moment her husband was out of sight, threw herself with renewed

## The Other Side

energy into the embraces of some other man or men; there was the stay-at-home who used the many new opportunities afforded for the exercise of sexual license; and the occasional village Shylock who would prey upon soldiers' families; there were the soldiers returned upon furlough whose thought of the uniform did not go much further than the chance to lead girls into trouble — in short, the seamy side of human nature came out, in what to these people with their simple lives were new forms. These were the inevitable incidents of the upsetting of all ordinary conditions, of a time when in reality patriotism often came to be as Samuel Johnson defined it, the last refuge of a scoundrel; but, like other forms of villainy everywhere, they were the exceptions and not the rule.

In like manner, cheating in the purchase, the quality, the quantity, or the delivery of supplies was seen; old, worn-out horses were sold for the use of some brave cavalry soldier or artilleryman; poor thin cattle or diseased swine were paid for by the government, each act requiring corruption or ignorance in the purchasing officer and quite universally collusion or downright fraud in the seller. If these elements could have been even fairly eliminated the cost of the war — in a time when billions did not lie around loose, as they did in later days — would probably have been at least a thousand million dollars less and many lives, lost from the exposure incident to fraud in clothing, food, and shelter, in imperfect or delayed transport, were actually thrown away as the tribute collected by fraud. These things went on in both the large and the small as they

## Pioneer Foundations

have in varying degrees in all past wars whether ours or others. Fortunately, victory came in spite of them and they were looked upon as so small that they were forgotten or overlooked except by those culprits who might retain some remnant of conscience.

Far less than deserved attention has been given to the hurt which every community suffered in the quality of the men lost. All normal conditions were upset. The proportion of fine, manly fellows sacrificed and the leadership thus lost in the war cannot be exaggerated. In so many cases, especially during its earlier stages, the best that the country had produced (and that, too, when the rougher features of the pioneer struggles had passed away — at a time when the higher gifts were most needed) perished without warning just when their work and abilities were most in demand in the period of all-round development then only fairly opening. Not only was the loss individual but it cast unnatural burdens upon those of the same age who remained; while many men of decided mediocrity were enabled to push themselves to the front in a way that inevitably hampered progress. This was felt in all the professions, in the higher ranks of business, in social and educational life — in every place where merit and high abilities were most needed. They were especially missed in the army itself where every iota of possible talent was an absolute necessity.

Looked at comparatively and with a cynical eye, it might be said that the enemy by reason of the smaller number from which to recruit ability suffered more serious

## Effects of Hasty Marriages

ly; but this did not afford much comfort when the men responsible for the preservation of the Union looked about for that help which was so sorely missed. The best not only thus suffered from loss by death or wounds, or illness; but the partiality and the unfairness of party politics and unworthy personal ambitions, still further impaired social efficiency and especially the ability to use the resources of the country with the power that ought to have been available.

### *EFFECTS OF HASTY MARRIAGES*

ANOTHER upsetting tendency from the war was the increase in ill-assorted marriages the effect of which was not seen for some years when the modern vogue of divorce set in. Promising young men returning home from honorable and efficient service, without the advantage of an all-round association with women, were often trapped into marriage by the first pretty face, or plump figure, or enticing ankle, outside their own kind with the usual unhappy results. On the other hand, the traditional attraction of the uniform led many young women, who confused patriotic feeling with personal attachment, to marry returned soldiers before any knowledge could be had of their character or fitness to be either husbands or useful citizens. Social types were often lost sight of, industrial conditions were so altered, that the ordinary precautions, always potent in marriage, were loosened or overlooked, and there followed as a matter of course an amount of infelicity that began in course of time to clog the divorce courts and



## Pioneer Foundations

to produce new laws each letting the bars down lower until, in the saturnalia seen for many years, they culminated in the practical removal of all hurdles.

Much of this social disarrangement was due to the loss in each community of ambitious young men, the logical husbands of these young women belonging to the most promising families. This threw such girls back upon another and inferior type who under the circumstances became a second choice; but society never rests, so that these marriages, practically compulsory, contributed to the bad results thus outlined. The effects in these cases were still more far-reaching and so showed themselves, in the next generation, in an inferior order of children that the degeneracy which came as the effect of war has been one of the strong forces in our life. It would have shown itself in the North only less prominently than in the South where it was so distinctly apparent if the great flood of immigration had not in some measure evened up conditions so far as mere numbers were concerned, thus hiding quality in quantity. It is well-known to all students that this is one of the most sinister of all the effects of war which, so long as women are immune from its worst perils, seldom seriously checks for any long period the increase of population; but does produce that serious decline in the quality of a people which hampers enterprise and progress. These causes operated with conspicuous force in new communities mainly because the delicacy of the social organism was already taxed to the utmost by the marked disparity of the sexes.

## Effects of Hasty Marriages

In another way, somewhat more direct, the influence of the returning soldiers was mischievous. That arose from their association with the young boys who had reached adolescence during the active period of the war. These were often drawn into bad courses by the mere absence of their elders upon whose return a sort of license existed and many times years were required to redress this social balance. Many of the younger set were drawn by imitation into methods and practices which, coming either prematurely or in unnatural force, were hurtful to the morale of both sexes. These are effects not often discussed but they are, nevertheless, among the strongest as well as the most insinuating of the bad influences created by that thing of violence known as war. None of these can be calculated in terms of statistics or revealed by formal research; but their existence can neither be ignored nor their influence measured. Draining into the sewers of social life they cannot be wholly concealed.



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THE INFLUENCE OF THE CIVIL WAR  
(II)



## THE RETURN TO CIVIL LIFE

A GREAT deal of eulogy — much of it deserved — has been lavished upon the return of the Northern soldiers — a million of them — to civil life. Seldom in history has the spectacle been seen of a young and peaceful people, violently disturbed in the course of quiet lives, coming back almost as one man to their customary employments, to an emphasized activity in all the agencies of civilization and to a fairly adequate understanding of each other in an almost infinite number of neighborhoods, after an armed civil contest of four years, each more furious, more costly, more destructive of life than its predecessor. Too much praise cannot be awarded to such men or to the times that produced them, nor can the fact be too strongly recognized that they were enabled to do this by reason of their unity of origin, their long period of preparation and suffering in common, their adequate leadership, and their unquestioned devotion to high ideals.

In spite of this seriousness, the feeling of depression that so permeates the life of a distinctly peaceful people thrown suddenly into war was strongly in evidence from 1861 to 1865. In spite of the fact that the country was so unmilitary: it was always filled with a warlike people. It had no soldiers, knew next to nothing about armed conflicts, had no idea of preparedness: but its interest in the large and imaginative side of war was perennial and uni-

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versal. So, while aggressive conflict was remote from its purpose and it knew nothing about it, as a reality, the interest was always great in outstanding military figures.

Somehow the soldierly achievements of General Jackson never appealed so strongly to the Pioneer mind as did that stern, rugged determination on his part to avert or defer civil war. While the achievements in Mexico were all the country had to show during a period of more than forty years, it cannot be forgotten that the contests of Napoleon were not far away. The romance of his rise, his conspicuous illustration of the idea of merit, was something congenial to the American mind. The fact that he was engaged for nearly twenty years in a life and death struggle with England, which to them in spite of the lapse of time was still the enemy, gave more than a romantic interest to a character that was outstanding in a time when most things in their own history were replete with the commonplace.

Outside Napoleon and our own comparatively small wars, the French Revolution had not made a special appeal to the Pioneer. His sympathy had been lost by a series of downright atrocities; but the achievement that gave Napoleon an undying interest to the new peoples lay outside the narrow logic of history. Nobody thought that the greatest of all cruelties had any relation to royalty and power; but he was looked upon merely as the instrument for giving serious and perhaps mortal hurt to an enemy whose injuries, whether real or imaginary, were never forgotten or forgiven.

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The absence in its own great contest of this outstanding leadership tended to produce a gloom that was sometimes almost overwhelming. So, the conflict had to be fought out by main force, without any relief from that hero-worship which often gives such a contest a sentimental position much higher than it could command merely as a contest at arms. It was, perhaps, best that the pure spirit of fighting should thus enable one side to wear out the other without one of those crushing defeats or victories that so often leave behind them bitter and undying memories.

In any event, when the fighting was over the soldiers of both sides were ready to meet on different terms than those generally fixed in a civil war. At the close this was probably more true than in any great contest known to history, ancient or modern. If the actual combatants who made up the armies set in the field could have had their way the Civil War would have been an instance in which the battle lines would have been an agency, much stronger in their large and beneficent influence than a quiescent peace where the pin-pricks of politics are always in evidence.

It would have been most fortunate if this could have been the reality; but the truth is that the vanity, the bad motive, and the tyranny of the conqueror began early to come out. Business soon came into a dominance hitherto absent. The beaten South was so stricken that it could not possibly do its part in the rapid growth that was necessary to overcome the terrible destruction of the pre-



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ceding four years. Its people, even when fairly left to themselves, had all they could do to bind up the wounds inflicted upon them by the struggle and their own folly; but they were not left to themselves because it was only a few months before there began to fall upon them the worst order of harpies ever seen in the path of war. It is not my purpose either to rewrite that awful story of reconstruction or to do more than recall the wild, fierce passions of the post-war period; but the good will that immediately followed the surrender of the Confederacy was succeeded by a second war of aggression and hatred which was never even fairly checked until the inauguration of Grover Cleveland in March, 1885.

In the fomenting of this revengeful sentiment the Pioneer region did its full share and more. It had its representatives among the demagogues, the plunderers, the creators of hate, the ungenerous enemies, most of whom knew nothing of the fine large instincts of the soldier, whom it too often used as its agent to cover concentrated villainies. It had its own contingent of thieving carpetbaggers, its own sleepless emissaries of a malice which was used at every turn as a cover for fraud and injustice. It would be gratifying to personal desire and to a conception of right thinking and doing if the West could be relieved of some of the odium it created for itself; but, as this cannot be done in fairness, it must struggle under its still remaining share of the burden not yet wholly removed. The Civil War had in it so much that was human, of almost the worst order, that when it is viewed with an historical eye it is

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always well to temper with many qualifications the patriotic braggadocio that naturally comes to the front, and to think how the real pride that must rise above the mists of vanity would have made impossible the long domination of the lowest passions that can possibly move men. If there had been any vestige of even that compassion which forbids one man to strike another when he is down, the whole development of our people since 1870 would have been so much enhanced as to make impossible a comparison of what has been with what might have been.

### *FINANCIAL THEORIES*

AS EVERY new people must take its turn in currency heresies, the West could not expect immunity from them; indeed it might well recognize why they should be more persistent and pestilent than those that had afflicted any other part. These people were early separated from neighbors who might teach by distress or by precept or example; they lacked in those opportunities for instruction that so temper public sentiment; and in the actual observation that is so efficient as a schoolmaster. Coming together as communities with almost no accumulated capital of their own, living through what was practically an era of barter when the settled principles and policies that lie back of formal exchanges were small and little known or regarded, they could scarcely be expected to understand the complicated financial conditions of which even older and more advanced peoples are often strangely ignorant.

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As they grew into a need for better knowledge, they found themselves in the grip of contending theories and practices. They were near enough to the revolutionary times to have some idea, at least by tradition, of the continental currency of that time but far enough away to forget or overlook the hardships and perils it had entailed. They were, on the other hand, the direct beneficiaries of the original national bank which was killed by both party politics and demagoguery when Andrew Jackson with a large measure of success finally succeeded in combining these two elements and turning them to his immediate political benefit with great resulting injury to his fame. The older parts of the country might have blundered on with some measure of success without a central bank; but the newer regions, with little capital of their own and almost no banking knowledge or experience, as their transactions increased in bulk and their relations with the outside world became closer, needed guidance. Divided as they were into so many States whose people, though they differed little from each other, came to have varying needs, they began to apply divergent methods with the result that their currency supplies so ran into water-tight compartments that one issue seldom passed in the territory of the other. There was, thus, no opportunity even to study their own methods with anything resembling general intelligence.

By the time that the Civil War came they were all living in the midst of a confusion that was constantly becoming worse confounded. The interference with trade of a general character was bad enough, only adjustable

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by experience when supplemented by unceasing watchfulness; but for the majority, whose transactions were few and small, there was a risk that hampered exchanges so seriously as to produce or threaten paralysis. A farmer might sell a load of wheat in the market open to him. If he knew the purchaser, he might be fairly safe in taking the currency offered in payment; but, if he wanted to pay a debt or buy some product only a county or so away from home, he had no assurance that the money received for the sale of a horse or for an odd piece of land would pass current in his own district. He could not know that the funds accepted even in his neighborhood on any given day would not be subject to discount or repudiation three days later. In one case that came under the writer's personal notice the proceeds of a crop sold by a prudent man for a nominal sum of twelve hundred dollars shrank to six hundred before he, a mover into a new home, could travel the five hundred miles between his place of departure in Indiana and his destination in Iowa.

The latest issue of the *Bank-Note Reporter* was an absolute necessity for the man who on business bent took even the shortest of journeys. It is impossible for the man of the present day, however firmly his knowledge or intelligence may impress these facts upon him, to imagine how his forerunners even upon the same physical scenes were able to transact business at all. When the Civil War came the spectacle was presented of the Federal government resisting the attempt of a State to secede and thus to set up for itself, while permitting (almost compelling) every

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State to provide its own currency and even allowing an indefinite number of paper currencies to be offered in each. By this method the State was restricted in its claim to secede from the Union. But in the most important function that has been assumed by modern government, the same State was encouraged to fix a mere paper representative of value without any reference to the general safety.

The act of 1862 under which the original greenbacks were issued changed all this, so far as the loyal States were concerned. Almost in an instant provision was made whereby the issues of State bank notes were taxed out of existence and the new currency became an enforced and accepted legal tender in all transactions. It was this function that subjected it to criticism and finally to an unfriendly decision by the Supreme Court. The latter, except as relates to its misleading character, does not enter into account in this narrative—its only interest being in the influence that it had upon one of the most mischievous and persistent movements ever seen in this country, one in which nearly forty years were required finally to settle the standard of value fixed by the Constitution, laws, and the customs of the world. A people who were the victims of financial anarchy were all at once relieved. Instead of being tossed in every direction, torn by losses, it found itself in the position of the sufferer whose pain disappears when the offending thorn is removed.

### REACTION COMES IN THE WEST

HAVING no traditions to guide their actions, they pro-

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ceeded at the first possible occasion to go to the other extreme. They leaped to the conclusion that because the government could do something in an emergency it could do everything at all times. Thus, the movement for inflation came to the front long before the hostile guns had been silenced. The leaders—as politicians are so fond of calling themselves—knew almost less than their followers of the merits of the question itself or the safe limits of governmental power; as an effect the self-assumed economist obtained an easy hearing and the airing of his ignorance seemed to fit in well with his interests so far as it promoted his own immediate advancement.

So they showed their ignorance with an energy and a presumption that were the marvels of their time. These movements were wholly distinct from ordinary politics. The party which had come into power as the result of the war had never had any training in the promotion or advocacy of sound finance. Its leaders had assumed no responsibility for general legislation on such questions and had almost no experience even in the wildcat order of banking that ran down in varying ranges of disorder through the States. These teachers, like the systems that were to be created, had to be improvised, conjured from the vasty deeps of local politics or drawn from the shallow wells of chaos and then turned loose to feel or guess their way through a series of financial labyrinths. It was not thought necessary to pay overmuch attention to experts—few of whom were even in existence. In the East fairly settled and reasonably rational banking methods were in

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vogue; but they were local, still in water-tight compartments.

The national banks which came into existence a year after the greenback found fair acceptance, but they were in no sense national except in name and because of a certain inspectional authority. The more they spread in the East the more bitter became the opposition to them in the West. Especially from Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, where some faint echo of financial soundness had been heard, came the demand for an indefinite issue of government notes, and the cry for them reverberated throughout the remainder of the Pioneer region. Republican leaders like Sherman and Morton joined in the cry, and many years were to pass before the former could do sufficient penance to justify his acceptance as the prophet of sound ideas. As for Iowa only two members of the war Congress stood firm at all times, and all over the region then coming into some semblance of its own power most of the leading men of the party in authority, those who had the making of its policies, either bent their heads to the storm or glued their ears to the ground awaiting some echo and then generally made their way to hesitation or to soft money advocacy. So far as the greenback became an issue, State and local platforms in the Pioneer area tended to heresy.

On the Democratic or opposition side any stick was good enough to beat a dog; so that heresy ran riot in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri, and showed its head perhaps timidly in the States where the party was in the

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minority — which was practically all of them. Thurman in Ohio, Hendricks in Indiana, and other leaders less prominent squinted towards the theory that favored the payment of the national debt in greenbacks; and in the Presidential campaign of 1868, the first after the war requiring decision and positiveness, George H. Pendleton of Ohio, though unable to command the nomination, carried his ideas into the national Democratic platform. Happily two events saved the situation. Horatio Seymour, the Democratic candidate for President, repudiated the declaration of his party and the Republicans by way of reaction from their opponents took a fairly safe position, so that General Grant when he became President followed the wise advice of Hamilton Fish and George S. Boutwell, and was enabled, in due course, when the question became really vital to save the country from greenbackism.

### *HOW THE CHANGE FINALLY CAME*

MANY influences contributed to produce this result in the West. The old prejudice against the East gradually abated as capital was required for that rapid development which began with the close of the war. The large immigration from the older States, where a semblance of sound financial theory had been maintained or had slowly developed, disseminated some knowledge of sane ideas. It soon became apparent that railroads and other improvements could not be made if the money required for them had an uncertain or shifting value or none at all. Commercial relations with older States were effective as educational agencies, as men



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and products began to circulate between one section and another.

Another potent force, akin to the last, was the great number of men who turned the tide of settlement towards the East. These were not the traditional movers back : they were the strong venturesome men who from every State went first to their nearest cities and with characteristic energy threw themselves into the new industries which they soon developed. As success followed, they went still farther to the eastward and thus became the advance guard of a movement of the best which since that time has sometimes taken on almost the proportions of a hegira. Sound views on public questions are never disseminated more effectually or with greater rapidity than in this way.

But the most far-reaching of the influences that tended to check the threatening flood was the attitude of the old-time Democrats all over the Union. These men had been trained in the Jacksonian school of hard money and whether they went over to the Republicans on the war issues or stayed with their own party all the time, or only came back to it as the conflict began to recede from view, had the same effect upon public sentiment so far as financial issues were concerned. Thurman swung back and thus retrieved himself; Hendricks ceased to be a suspect; and McDonald, Palmer, and hundreds of men less prominent in all the States of the Pioneer West never wavered so that in course of time the serious danger lest a minority party should take up any question that promised to attract votes passed away until the next trial came with later and

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less serious greenback movements, or the successive silver demands when these same men or their successors, standing for principles and sound policies, finally averted the financial perils that had beset them and their country.

The story of this succession of campaigns for financial soundness is a long one and needs a constant retelling. It did not end until 1896; but during the tedious struggles of a generation nothing could exceed the devotion of these men to principle. Fortunately, the final struggle came in time for many of these veterans to enjoy their triumph which was all the more complete, all the more welcome, because it carried down to defeat a pestiferous demagogue who was the product of the Pioneer region and of that part of it which falls within the geographical limits and in the period under study.

It has thus twice been the fortune of the Pioneer to save his country from threatened peril: once when by reason of his ingrained attachment to the Union he contributed over a million men in arms to avert disruption; and again when by a no less devoted attachment to principle and common honesty his good sense and his unconquerable conservatism restored to the world an assured sound system of finance. His motives were the same in each case. He was only carrying out those laws of his being which led him to protect and defend the things which to him have seemed sane and right. Here again there were no individual leaders, no man or set of men who could be said to have directed or achieved this result. It came in recognition of the righteousness of the cause

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and from the demonstrated ability of the Pioneer mind to work with conservatives everywhere for those things which all deem for the common good.

### *THE EXTENT OF THE SOCIAL CHANGE*

STUDIOUS men who had reached their majority by 1861 at the opening of the Civil War and then after its close lived on five years passing through them into the maturity and fullness of age have always averred that the changes incident to this short period were greater, more far-reaching in their effect upon humanity and its future, than in the nearly four centuries that had gone into the making of America since its discovery. Within this short time practically everything was revolutionized except that unchanging quantity—the nature of man. Industry in all its branches, agriculture, mining, commerce, transport; politics, with its outlook and aims; the whole habit of thought, education, literature, spirit—all had seemed to change almost over night. Our people entered upon the Civil War with heavy hearts, knowing that they faced problems of the utmost seriousness, the solution of which seemed to them as distant as the stars. Slavery, immigration, material development, the abnormal increase of population, the rapid growth of cities, the slow assimilation into uniformity or even into understanding, the rudeness of manners and their slow improvement, the tardy extension of republican ideas in other lands, the growing irreligion—it then seemed that any of these might precipitate society into the bottomless pit of ruin.

## Effects on Officers and Soldiers

Until that great event raised questions never before known or suspected by our people, they were living in a sort of Fool's Paradise fondly thinking themselves proof against all the perils with which humanity had been beset. They really believed that a great people could live wholly to themselves, segregated upon a vast undeveloped continent; could carry on their allotted task without regard to the experience or even the nature of men; and, in due course, build up a state of society from which bad conditions would be entirely eliminated. The changes introduced as the result of the war only showed how futile such hopes were. When, in later days, they came to analyze themselves they saw that they had not been introduced to anything new in principle. They realized how they had merely conformed to conditions as old as humanity itself. They found that the great world, in all its varieties, instead of leaving them in a hermit-like seclusion, had brought them into the universal heritage of men.

### EFFECTS ON OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS

THE number of private soldiers who came to distinction and great usefulness was beyond computation — naturally much larger, owing to the greater number, than among officers. In spite of the abuses inseparable from party politics the actual necessities of the service brought commissions to many efficient men. It was this service that bred in the lives of such young men the aspiration to go on with credit, opened the way to new ambitions, and drove them, once the war was over, back into school. For

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many succeeding years, far past 1870, the benches of the academies, colleges, and budding universities were filled with such young officers and men who, when they finally reached graduation, were many years older than the average of their fellow students. They were favored in some measure with scholarships which carried with them only free tuition, then nominal, or with help from friends, or they spent, while it lasted, the little money that they in their frugality had saved from their meagre pay as soldiers. In spite of their handicap many such students soon came to the front in politics, so that it was not long before the young soldiers were State legislators, Congressmen, or even United States Senators or Governors. Now and then a young private would take up the same order of studies and go over the same courses with the same results.

This influence often extended to the sisters of these soldiers, so that ambition and opportunity increased by what they fed on and thus both the facilities for education and the training itself grew by leaps and bounds. As with constantly widening markets farming improved, the original drudgery incident to the earlier Pioneer life began to be relieved or so to disappear that bettered facilities were all the time coming into actual use. While the instruction of that time might now be thought primitive or difficult, it carried with it to these eager young minds of both sexes the training power of the classics and mathematics both of which were fairly well taught. Instruction in science

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was gradually improved and extended, so that many of the youngest soldiers who did not complete their college and professional courses earlier than ten years after the close of the war or before 1875 thus won the rewards offered by our period of 1830-1870.

The advantages of the higher education were probably brought home to ten times as many students, relatively, in this immediate decade after 1865 as to those who had enjoyed these privileges in the preceding forty years within the Pioneer area. Thus, the indirect educational influence of the Civil War was of incalculable value. There has probably never been, in this or any other country, such a demonstration both of the advantages that may come to students of mature mind and of the fact that supply somehow keeps up with demand as in the years immediately under review. A good deal of time was necessary to reap the harvest grown from this seed of earnestness and opportunity, but it came finally with results that could scarcely have been more encouraging. No figures could be adduced to show these effects, but the life of the next quarter of a century proved this contention; so that, in the matter both of direct and indirect education, the Civil War was perhaps the greatest boon that could have come to unnumbered thousands of the young men who had survived its varied perils. It was still more helpful to society by its direct influence upon those who entered upon this period as children too young to remember even its closing days.

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### *HARDSHIPS OF THE PREMATURE OFFICER*

ONE type of soldier that passed through many difficulties and trials was the young man who had been pushed up out of due time or artificially into office or recognition often as the result of prominence with little reference to real standing or education. When such a man found himself at home again with the title of Major or Colonel or even of General (an unexpected dignity) but without business or other training, his real difficulties began. His position made it impossible for him to get away from it, so that like lieutenants or captains he could not drop back into school or throw himself into his trade or profession and thus complete his training and form new associations in perfect accord with his rank. So, these men were drawn into politics and that in such numbers that they stumbled over each other's heels. They were forced to appeal to a sentiment much of which was false and unnatural and to take whatever kind of place might be open for them. Loss of power, rotation in office, sharp competition with other soldiers of like quality or drawback would push such a man out of the way so that as soon as he had run his brief course and while still young he would find himself outside the breastworks of real life. Even men of parts, with creditable military service behind them, were wrecked in these miry shoals of politics. Many were forced to take refuge in minor places, as deputies to their successors, in the offices of treasurers, auditors, or sheriffs, or probably in some Washington department from which no kindly blast or explosion came along to dislodge them.

## Hardships of the Premature Officer

To this order of soldier the war was an unmitigated curse, and the human wrecks strewn in every neighborhood the country over were the most reckless waste of good man power seen in such numbers at any period of our history. Many men of the same type so fortunate as to belong to the minority party, and thus compelled to leave political hope behind them, came out with creditable careers and did honor to themselves both as men and as soldiers. The bitterness of defeat and failure came to thousands of men fully worthy to make their way in their various communities and to bring honor to themselves and the single work into which patriotic impulse had drawn or driven them. The sentimentalism upon which they depended was a broken reed in the day of trial; so they were forced to go through the remnant, generally long, of lives into which the light had seemed to come, only to be doomed to find themselves shut into a darkness like a sewer through which they had to crawl until the end.

This was one of the pains of war, only less severe than that other fate which turned some good men into tramps and vagabonds. War has so many compensations that its penalties must also be taken into account. If it were possible to open a social debit and credit account for every county in the great Pioneer region of the ten States under study the advantages would probably outweigh the drawbacks by at least a hundred to one; but some of the latter would, no doubt, be voted to be very serious.



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### ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE NEGRO AFTER THE WAR

TOWARDS the close of the war, when the claim was quite generally made that the one purpose had been the freeing of the slave, there was a strong opposition to this idea. The one distinctly announced purpose was the preservation of the Union and, in spite of the Proclamation of Emancipation, the President still disavowed this idea as dominant in his mind. Perhaps the most bitter feeling of the entire four years was created by this claim which was always denied even by the average partisan. But, when the end came the radical or ultramontane element merged the sentiment in favor of the prosecution of the war into the further movement to enfranchise the negro under the proposed Fifteenth Amendment. These people had had very little interest in the war as such. They had been too proud to fight, and thus showed anew that their whole idea was connected not with abolition alone but with the declaration of racial equality.

No more bitter contest arose during the entire conflict than this. Nothing even approaching a majority of the people of the North had favored emancipation as a primary aim, to say nothing of enfranchisement or equality; but the extreme elements, decidedly in the minority though they were, obtained control and in the contest with Andrew Johnson took the most radical ground until ere long the negro question dominated the politics of reconstruction and also those of the various States of the North. The Thirteenth Amendment confirming emancipation was adopted without a serious contest, with the seceding States

## The Labor Question as a Factor

excluded. The policy of the extreme abolitionists was fought with great bitterness. It is as certain as anything can be that there was never in the North or even in any State within its bounds, anything approaching a popular majority in favor of this policy; but the abolitionists were pushing and noisy and no more scruple was shown then than later in the methods employed to push other constitutional amendments forward to endorsement and adoption. The charge was made even thus early that the negro would be abandoned by his nominal friends as soon as they had procured the formal adoption of the Amendment, and this prediction turned out to be true. Once they had a formal endorsement of their policy they showed almost no further interest in the negro either as a race or as individuals, but went on to contest new fields in which they might assert or support other changes. Their only care seemed to be for agitation without regard to the support or practicability of the policy they had forced upon the country. They assumed that the enactment of law, not its enforcement, was the essence of a movement or demand.

### *THE LABOR QUESTION AS A FACTOR*

It was only natural that reaction should come after the close of the war on all the features entering into account. Much, altogether too much, was expected from the black race as the result of emancipation. It was hoped, though without much faith, by thoughtful men that industrial development would be greatly promoted by the employ-

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ment of black labor. Many believed this useful working element would be drawn automatically from one part of the country to another and thus redress many economic inequalities; but it soon became clear that the race was both unwilling and unable to make the expected contribution. Few negroes came into the North even when the districts lay within easy reach — less than a hundred miles away from Central Iowa — and the few that came were of little account. Where the selfish desire to get cheaper and more trustworthy labor had been a dominating influence, as was true in many cases, emancipation and the negro race were soon generally declared to be failures; from that day the negro ceased to be of interest to the noisy majority of the men who had insisted that he should be freed and endowed with a vote.

It was soon conceded that the employment of the negro by the North as a soldier had been both a racial and a military blunder. It is likely that it prolonged the war and lost, many times over, more useful white men than it contributed of blacks either in number or morale. When the war was over the South had been so embittered by this policy that its people could only expect the worst and they were never in a temper thenceforward to concede anything except what was forced by the exercise of pressure. The North forced upon the South the impossible thing then miscalled black equality after which its first act was to abandon the negro to his own devices. If the policy of protection from violence had been adopted and the negro had been left free to make his own way, if in other

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words his professed friends had not first coddled and then abandoned him, many of the most serious abuses known to our political history would have been avoided, and the organized Pecksniffianism of politics would not have been so amply illustrated. The negro was freed, turned loose as if he had been a pack mule, voted under military rule, in order to fasten upon the South new exactions, and his extreme partisans have had no further use for him from that day to this.

### ASSOCIATION ALWAYS FORCED AND UNNATURAL

IN TRUTH the relations of the white man with the black race so far as the two can meet on the same soil are forced and artificial. Whatever may be its virtues or its vices the white race is implacable in the enforcement of its own rules and prejudices so far as color is concerned. As these relate to the negro they are the outcome of that eternal condition of slavery, in some form, into which he has always been plunged. Whether or not this is normal or inevitable, either biologically or climatically, whether there is something in nature that makes any other state impossible either to the race or its separate individuals, it would be as presumptuous, as it might be unscientific, to assert; but there stands the great fact that no original and permanent contribution to religion, art, literature, government, social improvement, or science stands to the credit of the negro as a race. As time in its endless aeons has gone on, while the race itself has persisted it has been in a state of servitude, dependence, or degradation, or

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ignorance. There is nothing to indicate that, as the result of its own efforts, it is any further advanced in civilization relatively than it was in the earliest days of its historic existence. That it has improved is no doubt true but it has been as the imitator, the camp-follower, generally many steps in the rear, almost out of sight, of other races or peoples — even the most backward. How far this idea can be applied to other pigmented races, it is not now necessary to discuss, but everywhere the brown, the yellow, and the red man, like the black, is in some form, the vassal of the white — the sole exceptions, both nominal not real, being Japan and the Philippines. This one great fact is often lost sight of in dealing with political questions. The white is a strenuous asserter of rights, natural and artificial, of home rule, self-determination, and other elements qualifying dependence or independence; but he never, in point of reality, gets very far beyond his own claims or thinks seriously of those that pertain to any other race if there is any danger that in the carrying out of such ideas he might at any time weaken his own position as the predominant force of mankind.

### DRASTIC CONDITIONS MADE BY THE CONQUEROR

THE boast is often indulged that, after the Civil War, no man was executed for treason, no confiscations made, no indemnities exacted, and no cruelties inflicted. It is a fine claim, and if it were true there would be great cause for pride and satisfaction; but in reality the later history of mankind does not furnish an example in which there have

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been more aggressions of so many kinds or so much real tyranny, or more of the acts or effects that enter into the very refinement of cruelty. The war itself came to be waged with a vigor that was brutal. The assaults upon the pride of a peaceful population, the unyielding ferocity that accompanied the contest with people of the same stock; the fact that every word and motive were understood; that the spirit was the same on one side as on the other; and that behind it all there was more of the assertiveness incident to pretense and hypocrisy; that the exquisite sensitiveness on the one side was equally in evidence on the other and that the conqueror, with the usual callousness of his type, forgot or overlooked it; that it was not only the war itself during its active four-year period, but the intensity was practically unrelieved for another twenty years — it was these things that were, after all, the distinguishing features of the American Civil War.

All the worst features of conquest were brought into play : the bitterness, the absence of generosity, truculence of the lowest order, the constant nagging of a beaten people in public and private relations, the grasping economic spirit, the determination, Shylock-like to stick to the letter of the bond, the use of fiscal laws for sectional purposes, the pressing of unjust and dishonest pension demands — demands known to be unjust and often avowedly dishonest — the pushing of unfair advantages merely for the purpose of using a giant's power like a giant, these things went on for twenty years or until a new generation

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recognizing the shortsightedness of this policy finally revolted.\*

During all these years, while exaction and deliberate unfairness were the rule in politics, it was practically impossible for any man to make a speech or to write an article on any current question without a reference to "the late war." Politicians, preachers, lecturers, magazine and editorial writers all seemed to have their lips set mechanically — like the phonograph that was to come for the utterance of this stock phrase. The spectacle thus presented was akin to that of the patient who, recovered from an illness almost mortal, never ceases to talk about it. In truth, the time has barely come when, getting away from truculence and loud talk, it is possible to see and discuss some of the more important bearings of that time of stress and of the creative period which, although it preceded these conditions, has almost been lost sight of. It is only becoming clear during recent years that the war was not begun and carried on to bring about the abolition of slavery — now realized to be the most narrow concep-

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\* At the Annual Meeting of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association, held in Louisville, Kentucky, in May, 1924, Mr. James L. Sellers of the University of Wisconsin in "An Interpretation of Civil War Finances" made an estimate of both Northern and Southern expenditures in gold and greenback equivalents, the per capita expenditure in both sections, and the importance of the war finances in subsequent economic and social developments. He reached and recorded the conclusion that, counting taxes collected in the South for the payment of the Union debt, and for pensions to Union soldiers, a war indemnity of not less than a billion dollars was imposed upon the defeated section. — *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, September, 1924, p. 259.

## Some Other Results

tion that could be formed of one of the most stupendous of the revolutionary events known to history. When it was over, society in America had to begin again and, having in the interval laid the theological spectre, to discern in the remoter distance the ample figure of real religion and to relegate its narrow provincialism to the limbo of lost shades.

### *SOME OTHER RESULTS*

THE influence of the Civil War in promoting the study and practice in the new districts of music is great beyond estimate. By making it the incident of a patriotism which, though exaggerated almost to the ridiculous, still had in it many noble qualities, it became possible to learn very well a few tunes that had in them some elements of real music. For the most part, they were simple but they were such an improvement upon the awful monotony and dullness of the rude anthropomorphic church hymns of the time that the progress registered from that time forward was rapid, perhaps beyond precedent, over a territory of equivalent size, population, and backwardness. It introduced a large number of people to instruments to which they had been strangers and, with the love of music always inherent in men, in some form developed capabilities which led to such a general study that it became a real aid to worship.

The songs of the war were the first to be sung with some approach to system outside the old-fashioned hymns than which few attempts at harmony could be more dismal.



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The highest order of music thus far composed had been known in the great world but it was strange to perhaps ninety-five per cent of all the population then living in the Pioneer area. Nothing was more of a surprise to this great mass of active-minded people than to learn, almost as if the knowledge had come down as a special revelation, that there were really a great number of instruments that interpreted music, that there were compositions other than those which reflected the coarse hymnology of the time, so that the harmonies of the human voice really might be given a setting and an expressiveness hitherto missing. The ballads, old English, Scotch, and German, often truly doleful, had been known in the early life of Kentucky and Tennessee, but the Great Revival had so killed and buried them beyond resurrection that very few tunes were known even for singing and for these the exclusion of an accompanying instrument, but most notably the absence of systematic instruction had tended to destroy anything really resembling harmony.

There was the old-fashioned singing school, one of the great provocatives of humor throughout our earlier history and perhaps it had become even more primitive than its New England prototype. The Pilgrims did bring with them some remnant of the old English church music but, when this was overwhelmed in the new Puritan reaction, it, too, was gradually modified and finally lost. The primitive tuning-fork was all the funny looking teacher with his gyrations had to lead his choir or other gathering into some semblance of harmonious interpretation. It was at

## Some Other Results

least amusing to the onlooker, but the result of the instruction and the lead given was never very enlightening to participants. Among so many people there must have been a great number of exquisite boy and girl voices, but they could not be discovered or enjoyed because there was nobody to recognize and appreciate, nobody to train them and thus put them to the uses for which nature had fitted and intended them. So to use again the old figure, like the desert flower they were lost to the world.

But the war changed all this as if by magic. The fife and the drum, primitive and coarse as they were played, as then restored to use, became universal and it almost seemed that overnight the flute because of its kinship to the fife began to command study. Young persons who had never seen a musical score began to show an interest and the sudden demand produced a supply of manuals and teachers, all of them simple to a degree and no doubt amusing even to the rudest amateur, but useful and interesting as reflections of these newly awakened tastes. It was not long until the military band was heard in the land. The piano came, the fiddle returned to its own, and with it the dance began to creep slowly back, and it was not many years before that reprobated instrument, the organ, long exiled as one of the agencies of the devil, was making public worship a somewhat less dismal proceeding than it had been for so long. The Germans who, by this time, had come into the region in some numbers did much to revive music, mainly, perhaps, of a simple kind in the beginning; and in the cities it was soon possible to hear of and to

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have an Irish harp. Within the five years after peace had come, by the end of the period under treatment, a musical revolution was under way; and these people who had set in the field armies numbering more than a million were also enjoying the music to which soldiers had so long marched. Thus another beneficent influence of war had asserted itself.

### RAPID GROWTH OF LITERARY TASTES

THE war brought a development almost as sudden in reading and in the demand for instruction from a good order of lecturers, professors, and writers. Within a decade the rising American literature of the time found a recognition almost as sudden as the taste for music. Longfellow, Holmes, Hawthorne, Emerson, Whittier, Bryant, and Lowell, then living and in the very hey-day of their genius and productiveness, with names scarcely known in 1861 outside restricted neighborhoods were fairly popular favorites by 1870. Every form of literary production from the dime novel to *The Origin of Species* came into vogue with a suddenness which in an ordinary period would have seemed almost startling to the writers named as well as to the holders of the copyrights of Poe, Irving, Melville, and Cooper, and to living historians like Bancroft and Hildreth. Foreign writers were also the beneficiaries of this revival of taste. Thackeray, Dickens, George Eliot, Victor Hugo, Tennyson, Prescott, Macaulay — the dead among them along with the living — all the way down through various grades of merit, shared in this literary

## Pioneer Contributions to the Army

revival; while Burns, Byron, Scott, Wordsworth, Keats, and Shelley, to say nothing of Shakespeare, Milton, and the older classics of our language, found everywhere among the growing generations, but especially the soldiers and all others brought under the direct influence of the war, a recognition that was almost instantaneous.

It has often been claimed by short-sighted persons that the war was waged to free the negro then living in physical slavery. Whatever its intent, if it was other than one of these great events in history that do not lend themselves to prediction or calculation, it did at least bring to the people of America an intellectual and moral emancipation. It brought the higher order of education, the narrow and harrowing theology of the time, which had confined them in sunless intellectual canyons, had the light so turned upon it that the world of 1870 was a new world. Out of conflict had come a knowledge of our life and with it a consciousness that there were other countries and that both our achievements and our promise were built upon foundations laid by others and not by ourselves.

### PIONEER CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ARMY

WHEN subjected to analysis it is soon discovered that every section of the country responded to the appeal for volunteers with almost equal liberality so far as its comparative resources permitted. The conscription feature was so small as to be almost negligible, and nowhere was it made necessary by reason of organized opposition to the restoration of the Union: the one vital purpose for

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which the war was carried on. The proportion of volunteers to total population did not vary much in the different sections of the loyal States — being 11.9 in each hundred in New England, 11.7 in the Middle States, and 12.7 in the Pioneer States. In addition to its contribution to the Federal forces the latter section furnished about 185,000 soldiers from Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri to the Confederate ranks. These enlarged contributions were possible owing to the considerable disparity of males in the population.

The total number of individual soldiers in the Federal armies was 2,751,338 of which the general distribution was as follows: New England 375,131; Middle States 978,150; Pioneer States 1,282,338, with 206,062 distributed over the smaller outlying States or drawn in small numbers from the seceding States. Thus, out of a fraction of over ten million population the whole number under arms on both sides within the Pioneer area during the four years of the war was only a few less than a million and a half — a much larger proportion of the whole people even than from the seceding States.

The military contribution of the Pioneer States is also increased by the number of soldiers, naturally indeterminate, drawn from the 211,550 people born within their limits resident in 1860 in other loyal States. As the lowest estimate of the number, under the law of averages, would probably amount to not less than twenty thousand, the aggregate of fighting men in the Civil War drawn from the descendants and recruits of the persons who after 1769

## Pioneer Contributions to the Army

had passed into this area would be raised somewhat above the million and a half limit.

It is probable that nothing can ever occur again to equal this record. It is all the more remarkable in that this population was the fruit of a purely peaceful movement, that they had almost lost even the tradition of military training, and that until war was actually forced upon them in 1861 their whole purpose was to promote the ideas of the Union which were intended to make armed internal contests next to impossible. In numbers, the result is even more remarkable when it is considered that they were drawn from a white male population which in 1860 was only 5,464,410; so that the final effect was seen of more than one man in about three and a half leaving either by himself or by some family representative the peaceful occupations to which he was accustomed and putting himself voluntarily under the discipline incident to war and throwing himself into its perils.

In the Presidential election in November, 1860, the number of votes cast within this region was 1,980,996 divided as follows: Lincoln 828,259; Douglas 755,867; Breckinridge 178,762; Bell 218,108. This is interesting from two points of view: first, as showing an unprecedented proportion of soldiers to voters; and second, as showing how false has been the claim that the war was conducted by any one party. If ever any great movement had a general support from the people among whom it took place, that given in the Pioneer region to the prosecution of the Civil War to a victorious issue was that event.

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With such a contribution of man power as this it was not surprising that the West became assertive, sometimes even truculent. It recognized, even thus early, its importance in the contest under way, and it must be confessed that it soon came to magnify its office. This tendency was increased when it became the center of the war area. With Grant's victories in Tennessee in 1862 and the consequent result of opening the Mississippi to navigation — this feeling of confidence in their own star increased until it is to be feared that their attitude was not always one of overwhelming modesty. This sentiment was still further increased when large contingents of their soldiers were drawn into the eastern armies; nor was it reduced to any considerable extent when their own great soldier was chosen to command all the Federal armies and western lieutenants were entrusted with commanding responsibilities outside their immediate or adjacent areas.

### RECUPERATION AFTER THE WAR

MUCH speculation is indulged in history, especially by the advocates of pacifism, about the time required to repair the losses incident to war. Probably few instances are known (always excepting England after the close of the Napoleonic wars) when the healing forces of humanity operated so quickly and effectually as was the case in the United States after the surrender of Lee in April, 1865, and before the mid-year of 1870 when the next census was taken. It is not necessary to enlarge upon the sacrifice of life, both North and South, or upon the general

## Recuperation After the War

destruction of property. In the one case (that of the defeated) this was evidenced by the loss of visible property of every kind and also by that of the capital value of labor as shown by the enforced manumission of nearly four million slaves and the readjustment of economic conditions thus made necessary. In the North, the vast amount raised by taxation and expended during the conflict, added to the debt of three thousand million dollars left over for payment, attest in some degree the extent of material sacrifice incident to this fierce and prolonged struggle.

And yet, when the war was at its height President Lincoln in his Thanksgiving Proclamation, issued October 3, 1863, could declare: "Needful diversions of wealth and of strength from the fields of peaceful industry to the national defense have not arrested the plow, the shuttle, or the ship; the ax has enlarged the borders of our settlements, and the mines, as well of iron and coal as of the precious metals, have yielded even more abundantly than heretofore. Population has steadily increased notwithstanding the waste that has been made in the camp, the siege, and the battlefield, and the country, rejoicing in the consciousness of augmented strength and vigor, is permitted to expect continuance of years with large increase of freedom."

Even he could not then foresee or predict the extent of the material prosperity as it was to be revealed in June, 1870. I have thought it desirable to show this, in tabular form, in so far as it relates to population, wealth, farms, manufactures, education, and churches in the ten Pioneer



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States under treatment. In this compilation, money standards in 1870 have been reduced to gold values. This is done upon the assumption that such positive figures in a few items best illustrate comparative conditions at the two decennial periods.

### GAINS IN TEN PIONEER STATES

	1860-1870		
	1860	1870	GAIN
Population	11,221,317	15,089,068	3,867,751
Manufactories (number)	38,906	96,099	57,193
Schools (pupils)	2,580,935	3,699,915	1,118,980
Churches (number)	18,710	31,805	13,095
Farms (acreage)	145,295,954	162,426,009	17,130,055
Wealth	\$5,086,223,806	\$9,139,544,083	\$4,053,320,287

Some of the results thus shown are most astonishing as indications of the creative capacity that the country had then reached; but, more especially, as demonstrating its power of recuperation from the worst effects of such a wasting contest. Nothing can be more striking than that the population of the whole country should have grown at the rate exceeding twenty-two per cent; that even in the stricken South this increase should have been nearly twelve per cent, while in the Pioneer region which was settled less than a century it grew during this troublous period at the almost fabulous rate of thirty-four per cent within ten years. All these may be compared or contrasted with a growth of nearly twenty per cent in the remaining loyal States of the North.

Nothing in all this can be turned into an argument in favor of war as the normal condition of mankind, but it does answer a good many questions about the ability of

## War Fought by Real Americans

a young people to rebound when all its power, increased by new impulses and ambitions, is turned into the channels of peaceful activity. It must be admitted that as a matter of course the South suffered for many years, as it still does, in the check of its growth and prosperity. One of the propelling causes to this loss was the reduction in assessments or values by the destruction of one form of property; but, in the long run this loss was only nominal as the labor represented by this vast army of manumitted slaves soon began, in other and even more productive forms, to flow into the whole body of the surrounding population.

The most destructive agency in the South was that incident to reconstruction which has already been alluded to. With the wonderful recuperative power shown by its people and with its boundless natural resources, it could have stood the ravages of the war proper if it had not been compelled to pass through the awful punitive period that followed as an aftermath. It could have borne the punishment incident to its own folly and short-sightedness and its recovery would have been scarcely less rapid and conspicuous than that seen in the North. But the infliction incident to the carpet-bagger and that awful slough of obloquy through which its people had to wade were even far more than the last straw which is said to be so fatal as an animal burden.

### WAR FOUGHT BY REAL AMERICANS

THE Civil War, like every other feature that entered into the Pioneer life and development, was distinctly American

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on inherited English lines. A few Germans found a place in the army as officers of various grades, and many attempts were made to put them to the front as great soldiers; but this was not successful in a single case either in the West or anywhere in the country. Sigel, popular as a dashing soldier, was never entrusted with an important command where skill and judgment were required; Schurz could not forget his favorite game of politics and, although he rose to be a Major-General, had not a single attribute of real military skill; Osterhaus, another German, had respectable parts, but not enough to raise him out of the ordinary ruck of mediocre regulars; and so it was all along the line. They never could adjust themselves to American military surroundings and traditions. Fremont was not of foreign birth, but his origin and his traits made it impossible for him to develop any of the gifts of leadership of Americans. For political reasons, officers of foreign blood were treated with a consideration that better men could not command; but, as a whole, the army would probably have been better off and the success of the Union cause promoted if no foreign-born soldier had been preferred for an office above lieutenant.

The case was not much better with the Celtic-Irish. Barring Sheridan, who had certain dashing qualities better fitted for commanding popular recognition than for developing real leadership, the Irish representation was limited to men of the most commonplace qualities. They were brave and could fight in a charge or when the limelight shone, but they were almost wholly unfitted for that care-

## The Large Effects of the War

ful planning and that cool deliberation as leaders which enables an army to command victory. The West had its list of Irish Colonels, and one wholly ridiculous General, Shields; but, as a whole, outside the ranks which they adorned with a dash that was characteristic this branch of the race was practically commonplace in the army. Both they and the Germans had a gift, bordering upon genius, for seeking political rewards after the close of the war and thus for exaggerating their own value. It was artificial and so did not long survive.

The fact remains that the Civil War was an example of Americans fighting each other. On the whole, they were the representatives, on both sides, of the British race from which the population was drawn. Even that striking exhibition of leadership so often shown in the British armies by the Protestant Irish had no conspicuous illustration except in the marvellous genius of Stonewall Jackson. On the whole, as the war had to come, it was well that it should be fought to a finish by the men in whose veins ran the blood that had made the country and whose descendants, as history had shown, would have to take up the burden that it left. It was one of the contests which, like the Wars of the Roses and the English Revolution, could only be fought out by the men who really understood each other and thus knew, on each side, whom they were fighting and what they were fighting for.

### *THE LARGE EFFECTS OF THE WAR*

ALLUSION has already been made to some of the specific

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effects of the Civil War upon the people of the United States. As usual with such great events it is not always easy to see these in their remoter reaches. They are so pervasive, they run down so deep, both in the currents and undercurrents of life, that anything like a fair measure of their influence must be left to the teaching of a later time. As the history of such an event cannot be comprehended much less written by those who lived in it, so its remoter results cannot even be seen. Many of them are so hid that they escape discovery much less analysis.

Its most far-reaching effect was to reveal the people of the United States to themselves. Until the Civil War they had passed a strenuous youth living in isolation. They fondly thought themselves proof against the perils which in all previous times had beset humanity. They really believed that, segregated upon a great continent, they could carry on their work with almost no regard for the experience of mankind or even for that of their own ancestors, and that, by this means they could build up a state of society surrounded by novel conditions and achievements. They imagined that their own experiment in free government was the first that mankind had made and that it would be the last — because no other would be needed. They had reached a degree of assimilation that seemed to them perfect. They cared nothing for the Europe from which they had been drawn at divers times; had no idea that the Asia which they had innocently opened would ever mean to them anything more than a chance adventure; or that the Africa from which their most troublesome

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problem had come would again disturb their dreams or even have any more interest for them as part of a great world for which they cared nothing.

The war taught them they could not separate themselves from history; and it emphasized the conclusion that if in the future they should choose to do something, or even anything, they must do it in conjunction with the rest of the world. It is sometimes asserted that the war brought what are termed problems. This was not one of its results as all the questions which have since distressed us lay in solution like a refractory chemical agent long before the war came; its only function was to bring to the top issues from which, being human, there could be no escape.

The next most obvious effect of the war was to produce a national spirit or patriotism and thus to create a centralized national character. The boasted racial assimilation quickly disappeared, and its place was taken by confusion that aroused the whole people from a settled lethargy. The fine claims of equality disappeared so quickly that before the hostile guns had been stilled at Appomattox, the process of sifting out the indifferent and the incompetent had begun. We also ceased, with almost equal suddenness, to confuse the emotions of the individual or group with the intuitions of the mass.

At the same time the war developed a new political sense. For the first time the general government was brought home to our people so that they began to recognize its strength and to see its advantages without developing, with equal promptness, the prescience to warn of its

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weaknesses or to press home a knowledge of its dangers and its disadvantages. We began slowly to have some conception of currency, banking, coinage; to foresee where perils would arise from the strike and the mob; to realize that great power could not be developed without bringing temptation to use it for bad and selfish purposes. While, before 1860, it was seldom that there had been any large or general development of corruption in any of its serious forms, it was soon found that, with new needs and new projects of a size never dreamed of in earlier days, there were new temptations. In order to get really big things done it seemed necessary to take short cuts for overcoming inertia, or selfishness, or weakness, in the quickest and most effective way. The desire to do things spread beyond the select few in whose hands progress had been confined hitherto, and the area of ambition was enlarged, often with a liberality that invited peril.

### *HOW IT AFFECTED THE PIONEER REGION*

SO FAR as the Pioneer region was concerned it obtained its first taste of power. It was no longer content with what was generated for its own immediate needs. It had grown up as the devotee of Jefferson's ideas, and its people fondly thought that the processes and methods which had served it during its simple (almost helpless) life would always be sufficient. It soon discovered that such a theory of politics was not the last word. It had learned in the dear school of experience that force was as much a neces-

## How it Affected the Pioneer Region

sity as good will and altruism; and its people began to take account of something in the world whose existence they had not even suspected. This was soon shown in the seriousness of the youth of both sexes. Responsibility soon began to press upon them prematurely and, owing to the loss of association, with added force so that duties were imposed upon them in advance of their years. It so developed ambitions as to push young men out from the home farms some years earlier than had been customary. After the excitement of five strenuous years, the new opportunity for work and achievement tended to make the old life dull and uninteresting. The war had not only developed aspiration where no chance for it had existed before, but it opened inward an almost infinite number of doors to the house dedicated to opportunity.

Nowhere in history have such conditions been developed except through war. Our two wars with the mother country had given glimpses of the light of independence, but after the long trek through the wilderness it was left for the Civil War to complete the process of bringing a real independence to these wandering peoples. It made life over for them, in a few years, as unconsciously as the Industrial Revolution which began in the late seventeenth century had reconstructed Europe and through it the world. They were able, in due time, to throw off that almost unrelieved religious gloom imported by the first settlers of this country both to Virginia and New England. This had illustrated, at its best and its worst, the achieve-



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ments attributed by an eminent writer to the Kirk of Scotland in the eighteenth century.\*

Attention has already been given to the rapid material and intellectual development within the five years that followed the close of the war. These people of the West, these real Pioneers, found themselves cooped up on a series of farms with work in plenty, with enough to eat, drink, and wear, with ample shelter; but they discovered, as if it had been revealed in a vision, that they had no corresponding or adequate intellectual outlook, little of the light that should brighten the pathway of men. For them the air generated by the activities of the mind was either non-existent or stifling. They were so enfolded by the commonplace as by an atmosphere that they could no longer either breathe or work in it.

So there was nothing for the young to do but to struggle out of it and to go somewhere, anywhere, to escape. For most of them the city, in some of the forms that their forebears had dreamed of it for a hundred years, was the only relief. The small town, perhaps adjacent, the railroad junction, the county seat, the State capital, the more distant, unknown city — any place that would afford escape from the awful humdrum life in the places in which they found themselves. The approach of the railroad gradually let in fresh air and light so that the ambitious, progressive boys and girls with their unsullied blood and plenteous

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\* "It was still offensive enough and potent enough to make life miserable, to warp the characters of men and women, and to turn the tempers and affections of many from the kindly natural way." — William Ernest Henley's *Life of Burns*, Vol. IV, p. 233.

## How it Affected the Pioneer Region

character, with the best origin, with the potency of high ambitions, struggled out.

For a time the movement almost took on the proportions of a hegira. They flocked to new farms long awaiting the plough; they built the railroads or worked on them; they ventured into small or large centers of population — any place to find activity, life with a promise, a prospect, or even a hope. In like manner thousands of other boys and girls cooped up in distant American factories, or at desks, and many in foreign countries, jumped into the places left vacant and into new ones created by their own energy and enterprise. At few times in history have the direct and cross-currents of humanity flowed with more force and, at the same time, with more of system and intelligence than those which characterized this mighty West after the Civil War.

So much for the influence of war which so many persons have been falsely taught to believe is always the curse of mankind.



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## *CONCLUSIONS*



*THE END OF A PERIOD*

WITH the arrival of the period set for the conclusion of this study — the fateful year of 1870 — the American Pioneer had gathered an assimilated population; he had founded or adapted industries; he had adjusted to himself, social, religious, and educational institutions, and had done his part to strengthen them; and he had thus made for himself a place in the life of his country and the world. He was not only fitted to conduct his own affairs, but was ready to assist in the larger work which awaited systematic human efforts.

As the result of this preparation and of the great unrest incident to the violence of war, his home duties had been enlarged and his obligations increased far beyond any limits that he had foreseen or could have imagined. He could no longer contract his activities to his immediate environment. So far as this was concerned, he had made his last stand as a real Pioneer after achieving a high order of success; but he stood upon the threshold of a new era and so had to gird himself for unaccustomed duties. He had to stretch out his hand and welcome from every quarter of the earth's surface men with strange voices, speaking unfamiliar languages, and with traditions, faiths, customs, manners, prejudices, and problems wholly new to him.

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### *THE GREAT AND SUDDEN CHANGES AT HOME*

IT SEEMED as if humanity, as then living upon this new continent, had had focussed upon it an almost infinite number of events to all of which it must, in some way, adjust itself.

At home it had passed through a disrupting, destructive Civil War in which all previous aspirations towards unity and fraternity had been scattered to the winds and their places taken by hatred and misunderstanding. It found itself compelled to concentrate its energies upon the payment of a debt that gave no other impression than its weight and its danger to industry, in connection with which the serious moral question arose whether it should be paid as a whole, honestly and manfully, or whether, in accordance with a policy which has always presented itself in times of war and trouble, it should be repudiated by recourse at first to an inflated paper currency and then, when it had taken this initial step, should complete the process and pay not at all.

In the long and arduous struggle for the resumption of specie payments, this Pioneer West, though imperfectly instructed, was to play its full part in the movement that insured honesty, established and maintained public credit, and made its people realize for the first time that they were actual participants in world conditions and policies. They found that they could no longer remain intellectual or political provincials. This knowledge carried with it the ultimate acceptance of the gold standard and thus forced them to take a long look into the future.

## New Industrial Activities and Demands

It was necessary for them to adjust themselves in a comprehensive and intelligent way to the policy of providing the largest possible development of transportation facilities to meet their own needs and to fit them for the work they had to do. They had to devise land and settlement policies for an oncoming flood of comers from all over the world; and in connection with this really comprehensive immigration problems, both of inclusion and exclusion, confronted them. By this time their government had purchased Alaska; and the proposed annexation of San Domingo, though abandoned, the mere discussion of it as a possibility had projected questions which were finally to lead to colonial acquisitions, long resisted but then not so much as dreamed of. The Alabama Claims forced into consideration foreign relations of an order whose settlement required tact, courage, knowledge, and a persistence; all of which might easily have failed. Protection, hitherto little more than a catchword, now became a large and insistent policy in which either then or now the difficulty was to determine whether the honest collection of public revenue or the gratification of individual and corporate greed was the stronger motive.

### NEW INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITIES AND DEMANDS

THE maintenance of industrial enterprise at a standard which would meet demand and could be used to promote higher standards of life; the abandonment of an outworn religious system without a rapidity that might produce shock, or with a timidity that would indicate ignorance



## Pioneer Foundations

and cowardice; the gradual recognition that public and private safety required greater watchfulness and a more efficient recognition of the necessity of force, thus realizing that a larger reliance upon the police power of the State, in all its branches, would be one of the necessities of the future; and that education must be modified and then provided upon a scale hitherto unsuspected — all these questions were fundamental and, whether the need was immediate or only prospective, they argued the possession of a vision and an ability to act, which might or might not be present.

In spite of drawbacks, the potentialities of character were so great that there have been few times when men have so risen superior to their weaknesses and ignorances and up to the full measure of their duties and powers. With all these, the developments of science, both pure and applied, raised questions of which these people, hitherto simple, knew almost nothing, but to whose demands and opportunities they were forced to yield if they were not to be left behind in the friendly race which the peoples of the world were running.

Almost overnight, as it were, the infant nation had grown up and was becoming really national. It was, in effect, as if the boundary lines of States, districts, counties, and townships had been swept away, and these struggling individuals — component parts of a people — none knowing his way, had been thrown pell-mell into a chaotic mass and thus compelled to struggle out as best they might. Henceforth every thoughtful man, if he was to understand

## New Industrial Activities and Demands

his time or even himself, must read a national newspaper; he must listen to an orator who either was or aspired to be national; he must take an interest in a national sport, then for the first time rapidly taking form; if he could find it, he had to hear or read a sermon by a national or a universal preacher; he must see world plays and read classic poems or novels or histories; he must make himself familiar with national or international courts where his own case might at any time be called; he must look forward to national banking; and he must get excited about a President rather than a Governor or a Sheriff — in a word, he had suddenly emerged out of the provincialism that had enshrouded him — into a larger outlook, a more comprehensive responsibility.

He was not alone in his removal to a higher plane. While still speaking the language of the Pioneer he had come into a new outlook, nearly all the rest of the world had also come up. Everywhere there were mighty changes that no mind, however comprehensive, could have foreseen or anticipated a generation before; and he had to adjust himself, however slowly, to them.

While the war had delayed wide or general recognition of the fact, the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species*, in 1859 had revolutionized science, philosophy, history, and theology. With this had gone also the political despotisms that had been both the white man's creation and his heritage during his later history. War had not ended, as indeed it never will, but the settlement of the Alabama Claims contention which passed before the eyes of that

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generation was perhaps the most effective protest against unnecessary contests thus far made in history. Its ultimate effects in promoting the final and friendly coöperation of the two branches of the English race, formerly parted in anger, was one of the commanding achievements of a time full of activity and greatness.

### CHANGES IN THE WESTERN CONTINENT

DURING this period of ferment in the new world when the Pioneer largely as the result of his own work was fairly coming to his own, almost every quarter of the earth was making its distinct contribution to unrest and to progress.

On the same continent Canada had completed its formal Confederation, a movement which was to exercise a strong influence upon every people that used the English language. It came at a time when agitators and busybodies were advocating a union of that enormous outlying region with the United States — something impossible from any practical point of view. Its defeat, the rebuke thereby administered to the prophets of disunion, the refusal to overload the Great Republic with burdens and responsibilities which might then have proved fatal, and the promotion of the final more effective unity which was to come in a time of supreme crisis, had a wholesome effect upon the world. Perhaps nothing in the later history of England has done more to increase good will than the policy of Confederation in Canada — the first of those dominions to become one of the water-tight compartments of a great

## Changes in Europe

empire, once threatened with an unwieldiness that might have been fatal.

In another quarter of the western continent, settled government came within the same period to Mexico. For the first time that favored spot of the earth's surface found peace and stability. It was brought into outward harmony with the American system, and for nearly fifty years it had a government which enabled it to show, even in a crude and brutal way, what could be done with and for its people. It matters not that the experiment degenerated into a despotism which, inviting and assuring disintegration, had to be put down by violence. While it continued it exercised upon the Latin peoples an influence which promoted a gradual approach among them to settled government so that taken in all its bearings it was wholesome and necessary. In the absence of this experiment, tried though it was under many unfavorable conditions, the fever of revolution south of our border might not have been allayed. In addition to the example of the United States, there was the necessity for a demonstration among these peoples of the possibility of self-government even if its quality was imperfect.

### CHANGES IN EUROPE

IN ENGLAND, within this period, came the disestablishment of the Irish Church; the extension of the suffrage; the recognition that some effective system of popular education was a necessity; the correction of many anomalies and of some abuses inherited from feudal times; and an industrial

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growth that will always remain one of the wonders of the modern world was under way. The effect upon America of these changes was scarcely less striking than those within its own borders.

It would be impossible to exaggerate the influence upon American life of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. The fact that our only distinctive — although mainly sentimental — friend among the nations of Europe, our ally of nearly a century earlier, should have seemed to go down like a house of cards, and that the general trend of American sentiment had been sympathetic with her enemy, is one of those historical examples well characterized by Lord Salisbury as putting money on the wrong horse. It was nearly fifty years before our people or the world could understand the methods by which this had been accomplished, or could take effective steps in the supreme trial of civilization to do penance for mistakes which with difficulty are redeemed from the category of crimes. But the influence which this event was to have upon America, remote though it seemed to be, was profound in demonstrating anew that in human destiny despotism cannot be considered a permanent force.

In Italy ideas and forces long dominant among the people of this early nursery of the white race began with the reactionary Papacy of Pius IX to gather momentum. They were in many cases chaotic and wild, almost beyond control; but, in course of time some semblance of system began to make its appearance. The constructive statesmanship of Cavour forged slowly to the front and finally over-

## Changes in Europe

came and crushed the guerilla tendencies of Garibaldi and the wild tribes that followed him, and finally buried beyond resurrection the tyranny of Austria and the anarchy that overflowed from Western Asia and the Balkans.

Perhaps the most influential movement for progress — in outward form the most unnatural — was the work of the Ecumenical Council in 1869. Its results were soon apparent in the American people, however remote from the scene, however reactionary or even abhorrent the methods employed. It put the seal of success upon a religious reaction wholly out of harmony with the ideas always struggling for dominance in America and it made much harder the efforts of men for real forward-looking policies.

During this same period the beginning of the end for reaction began to be seen in Spain in a republican activity which, though premature and unnatural, worked in harmony with like ideas in different forms in Russia, Turkey, the Balkans, Austria, and even in the Scandinavian countries in which disruption or so-called liberalizing tendencies were potent in producing a discontent mostly without real foundation in knowledge or grievance; still it had a profound effect upon Europe and the world. In whatever direction the mind or attention of men was turned, human unity came more and more into evidence, and America, so long segregated, was steadily drawn, almost drifted, into relations so close and binding that it was no longer any more possible to break than to neglect or disregard them.

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Even Asia had begun to turn uneasily in her long sleep as Japan started on a career which still further enlarged the area of world interests.

The rapid intrusion into America from all these quarters of the earth of great masses of population, with newly aroused desires but without any preparation for the ideas that really lay behind that world, created as the result of great discoveries and large development, again modified conditions in a way that not even the most thoughtful and prescient of men could have foreseen. The foundations of society were never broken up because they are solidly laid in the cement compounded of religion and the ownership of property : the higher sentiments or aspirations of mankind united to the desire to use the earth as the cohesive force which shall bind them into a unity. Neither America, with its scattered population, then fairly homogeneous, nor those outside representatives of ignorant and inchoate masses could meet such an emergency without producing shock. As a result, for more than a half century after the dynamic forces at work from 1840 to 1870 had got fairly at work there was little chance for thought and stability to operate.

The great events, so briefly indicated, had come out of a long period of agitation and disturbance beginning with the settlement of America and followed by the revolutionary movements of the eighteenth century covering the whole western world. These far-flung settlements that with the free physical movement of men spread everywhere into new regions were bound to produce an unrest

## Influence of the Centennial

which was itself only an outward sign or reason. This was most apparent in the region under study, because it was here that it had sea-room; it spread with diminishing force into every part of the world, and was nowhere more influential in threatening the superstructure of society without really shaking its foundations than in the great district so favored in its climate and the character of the people who lived or were drawn into it.

The completion in 1869 of the Suez Canal, projected centuries before, prefiguring as it did the opening of other great highways of communication, the growth of science in all its ramifications, so reduced distances and enlarged the boundaries of the world that men could the easier understand its requirements, measure its possibilities, and see their own responsibilities.

### INFLUENCE OF THE CENTENNIAL

JUST as this period was closing, as the natural effect of assured national unity, came the time for sentimental celebration; so that when the fighting of the Civil War was over and its passions began to cool, the movement for recognizing the hundred years of independence naturally took shape. The Centennial Exposition, held in Philadelphia in 1876, finally revealed the country to its own people — in its bareness, its crudity, and its incompleteness as well as in its variety and its strength. For the first time they saw a really new world in that old one hitherto hid from them. The great number whose physical view had been restricted to a small neighborhood found a new per-



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spective when they flocked to that somewhat crude spectacle on the banks of the Schuylkill. Art in painting, furniture and manufacture, methods in mining and agriculture, first revealed to them an actual, ocular existence, while through them imagination showed to their eager eyes the whole of Europe and, indeed, the world. For these people, the great continent from which they had drawn origin, ideas, people, religion, and their whole civilization, was first seen as in a vision. It had previously been little more than a mere name, a sort of synonym for oppression, for effete methods and manners, for low morals, for religious intolerance, without foundations or a history prior to the early days of the sixteenth century when their own began. It had been to them a dim fiction, a place of clouds, fogs, and mists where wars were generated and fomented. But here it stood before their eyes, transferred and transfigured as a concrete thing, with evidences of a life hitherto unsuspected, with its art, its architecture, its treasures, its history, and its varied developments, the product and the property of real people who had sent them for inspection and study, by the eager eyes of hundreds of thousands of visitors, the heralds and representatives of the millions behind them, and every man and woman, all curious as children, recognized themselves for the first time as a part of this human pageantry.

So, if the Civil War taught the American people to know themselves, this international exposition, held nominally in commemoration of what they had deemed merely a national event — in reality one somewhat artificial and

## Some Effects of These Rapid Changes

premature — revealed that great world which lay behind and outside of themselves. For the first time, they came to know that peoples no more than men can live to themselves alone. If the first fair held in London in 1851 showed England how much she could win from the great world outside her island and thus exercised a profound international influence, the educating process was carried much further when America saw that it had made for itself a real place in a real world.

It is often claimed by philosophers that only war can complete the development of mankind and give it an understanding place among the largest movements and influences; but these two peaceful pageants have been at least supplemental in revealing what had been done and in arousing the popular imagination to higher achievement. The American Pioneer had with almost painful patience worked out his own salvation during a weary century of toil and suffering, only to learn at its end that the wider and longer vistas of history must be sought and found outside himself and his country.

### *SOME EFFECTS OF THESE RAPID CHANGES*

As a result of these developments the people in the United States who, since 1870, have found themselves upon the human scene have lived in a new world not of seclusion but as the heirs of everything that had preceded them. The horizon enlarged so rapidly, the requirements of men grew so far beyond ability to meet them by old methods, while at the same time intellectual and religious outlooks

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were so changed that almost without notice the whole world had apparently and for the first time in its existence begun to pass through a period really creative. It was as if the processes of evolution had been suspended for a time only to leap suddenly over a series of steps and thus to produce real revolution. In reality it was neither creative nor revolutionary; it was the result of unseen laws which, working long and slowly, had produced astounding effects hitherto impossible because unneeded.

The outstanding wonder is not that the West has finally become populous, rich, and powerful—a force in the world: the real wonder lies not in the end but in the beginning, in those restless individuals and groups who venturing into this strange environment had the power and the courage to endure the hardships or run the risks inseparable from such a life. That development should have been steady and continuous all along the line that, whether the surroundings were attractive or repulsive, an orderly succession of the same order of people should have gone everywhere all ready to do the same kind of hard physical labor regardless of drawbacks or discouragements—these united must forever remain the marvels of a period filled with the marvellous. It is the more remarkable that in doing this work all human precedents were overturned or disregarded. There was no government direction and only the smallest provision of protection for life and property; there was no army; nowhere an appointed leader; nothing but primitive methods of transportation; only the simplest of tools or machinery, so that both as a part and

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as a whole no more distinctive triumph of individual effort has been seen among men, nor in all probability will such a spectacle ever be possible again.

While there was a certain uniformity in the communities scattered through these ten new artificial States, the opportunity offered in them collectively for variation in character has been one of their outstanding features. The first and most important influence in producing this result has been the fact that they are scattered over a ten-degree zone of latitude so that every order of gift, talent, or aptitude, possible in a temperate clime, might have scope for expression. If local surroundings did not meet the demands of given individuals, families, or groups they would move on almost unconsciously until they found something that fitted fairly into their desires or needs into which they could fit themselves. This consideration entered more closely than any other into the policy of adjustment in widely-separated neighborhoods and thus not only promoted the making of a particular character but forced an all-round development over the vast area.

In the final result this development was completed in the forty-year period under review, within which the neglected or overlooked places were filled and the character of the larger divisions fixed upon lines destined to be fairly permanent. Within this time each grew into a fair semblance of what it was to remain. For the most part this character was fixed by the original settlers, a conclusion applicable with a fair degree of consistency to settlement in this country from the earliest days. Every colony, how-

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ever its population may have shifted from one to the other, had become a separate entity even before the merging processes incident to the War of Independence began to work. New England was seen to be not merely one community with a uniform character but six (even Vermont and Maine) though bearing only a territorial relation differing from the four parent types, while every Middle and Southern colony was itself and not something else.

Ever since that time, as States these same communities have been coming back to themselves. Notwithstanding the strong and almost irresistible drift towards uniformity and centralized power each has maintained and preserved its own peculiarities. Like an individual it has been itself and not another, a fact that accounts for much of that moving-back tendency to which in the course of this study attention has been so often directed. In the main this conclusion applies to the smaller divisions such as districts and counties. If one was either progressive or backward in its early days, it has so remained even down to the present day. If one was solid or staid its people have kept on their way in substantial harmony with their original tendencies. If it was impulsive in the beginning, it has remained amenable to the influence of mobs or feuds, or has been responsive to the appeals of demagogues. In one, a series of wild revivals would be anomalous and in another it may have been impossible to make a religious appeal by this hysterical method. Here repudiation or financial heresy could never get even so much as a hearing; there little else would be listened to. A county or

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State would give its allegiance to one or other political party, or be drawn to a given sect by some unexplainable accident in its early life; while the attention of an adjacent State or county would be diverted to a different political party without any apparent outward reason that could explain the diversity.

In short, all the various tendencies, traits, passions, hopes, and ideas that could enter into a given people anywhere would find expression and association within these pioneer limits, only awaiting, like an individual, time, experience and a wider perspective to develop into that uniformity which is one of the strongest of human tendencies. One is, therefore, constantly impressed with the fact that the life herein described is after all only a repetition on a different scale of what has been seen throughout history in the oldest civilizations as well as in their later developments. Egypt, China, Babylonia, India, Greece, Rome, Germany, France, Scandinavia, England, Japan, all seem to reproduce themselves with only the minor changes incident to race, climate, soil, proximity to the sea, transportation facilities, knowledge of each other, and the consequent association in religion, politics, wars, or commerce. The impression is constantly emphasized of the general likeness which human nature bears in one place to what it is or may or must become in another. Whatever the unity or the diversity of origins, the human qualities developed under these varying scenes and in periods widely separated, remain substantially the same.

Religions, whatever their beginnings, fall into a general

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classification, even the similar sects or heresies into which they are divided springing up on distant scenes. Government, while differing in outward form, so reproduces itself in its varied shapes that the weakness at one period, the distribution at first mainly over local powers, the gradual change into centralization or combination, and finally reversion into the original process seems to go on from age to age. The Pioneer thought that he differed essentially from his remote ancestor on some other and distant scene; but taking into account the fact that mechanical development is much less influential in the long run than is generally claimed, the reproduction of ideas and institutions is after all the most striking feature in that human life which, let it be found where it may, is so much more striking in its likenesses than in its differences. We only have the advantage, in the case of the Pioneer, of seeing it with the individual eye instead of being compelled to study and reproduce it under the workings of the imagination.

### *EFFECT UPON DEVELOPMENT*

IF IT were permissible to anticipate, even in the most modest way, the changes among the people on this Pioneer area within the generation that succeeded the Civil War their development was to be quite as comprehensive on all the lines that make for manhood and rounded character as that which had accompanied them in settlement and war. It was only different in result, not in character. They had to enter upon competition new to them — not

## Effect Upon Development

among the show people who came together to judge or admire each other, but to adjust themselves to the active, pulsating world from which they had hitherto been secluded. They had to acquire a primitive knowledge of art and literature, to learn that false and weak theology, however traditional, however widely accepted, was not real religion, and that politics had larger phases or limitations than their immediate predecessors had even so much as suspected.

They were drawn almost wholly from the life of the farm whose boundaries and elevations did not give much of a view over a wider horizon. Their labor had been hard, almost menial, and their problem was how to rise out of it and thus to meet new demands. Engaged in the outward employments of the mechanical peasant they had to use their natural chivalry in order so to raise themselves to new heights that the underlying potentiality of mind should be fitted into the actualities of wholesome bodies. Always accustomed to responsibility, learning the methods and sharing the ideas and aspirations of their elders, having grown almost unconsciously into the work of the neighborhood, it carried with it a knowledge of public spirit and the thought for a neighbor.

But they had also grown up in the commonest order of houses, without opportunity to see a picture or hear a great preacher; deprived of the highest music and without systematic access to the best books, old or new; limited to association almost exclusively with their own; without educational facilities, and pursuing all the time the most



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toilsome of trades. How, then, could they hope to emerge from such surroundings and how did they really come out of them? How could they hope to take themselves, comparatively late in their lives, and make something worth while out of the remnant? They could not rely upon artificial aids to remain something more than the clods of the valley that their class is supposed to be irrevocably.

Their power to escape was the result of a training, a discipline carried on relentlessly through hundreds of years, the heritage of many generations of an ownership of the soil that they had owned and tilled. The simple surroundings of their lives when persistently maintained in positions of individual and class independence were the natural outgrowth of such an environment. It was these qualities that had made the institutions under which the people lived. They were not the victims of violence because they had always been ready to defend themselves from assault either in body or mind. They had not been the victims of any hampering state church; there has been no need to attempt the impossible task of creating equality by law or edict; and no interference with the free growth of both individual and corporate strength. No great skepticism, no distrust, no oppression for opinion's sake, no permanent recognition of small men as imposed by artificial distinctions has tied their hands or contracted their minds. They have been free in reality as in name, and the knowledge of this great fact has given them the confidence necessary to go forth and embrace opportunity wherever it might present

## The Pioneer's Contribution to the World

itself and yet preserve them from arrogance and assertiveness.

### THE PIONEER'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE WORLD

I HAVE endeavored to avoid the quite common tendency to consider society pathologically; to find something the matter with a great people, and then as in a hospital for the body or a sanitarium for the mind to set out with the avowed intention of prescribing a remedy — in the view of social healers — always universal and infallible. I have preferred to take men as I have found them, to recognize that if there were discouraging features both in them and their surroundings they had neither been drawn from angels nor recruited from devils. That they have been human has, for me, given them their real interest and value, both in themselves and as a subject for study and literary treatment. In the earlier history of man he often insisted upon deriving himself from demi-gods or demons, however unnatural or artificial, and thus devoid of interest until their relations to earth became fully established and recognized.

There has been no mystery, nothing concealed, in the peopling of America as a whole or in any of its parts. Movement to and fro has proceeded upon the lines of a freedom as nearly perfect as possible. Almost no restrictions or prohibitions have kept men from going where inclination or interest or both might carry them. When the Puritan colonies drove them away to gratify superstition or for a difference of opinion, the expulsion carried

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with it no abiding penalties and involved no dangers from wild beast, or famine, or enemies. Even in these cases — unless they were the victims of witchcraft — men were the beneficiaries of this freedom in movement.

Even in their new surroundings, so long as they could protect themselves, no feudal tenures bound them to a given spot; when, for a time, paupers were restricted in movement it was more for the purpose of assuring protection than from any desire to interfere with their shift to and fro. So, from the earliest appearance on the American continent of the conquering elements of the white man each individual or family of every generation has moved at choice without resort to settlement by colonies, without deportation, except as a punishment for crime, proceeding under the eye of all who cared to note him, finding his own place, protecting himself on his way or when he halted, associating as he desired, working as his interest dictated, worshipping as he might elect, staying or going on, restless, never enforced in anything, but never content with what he had or saw, and interfering as little with others as they with him.

While they went out into the new world in a new way to subdue the earth, they were governed by the passions and interests always inherent in men. They were not some new species, caught up in a whirlwind and transplanted bodily to an unknown country or dropped from the surface of a swift moving planet. If they had ideals and aspirations, if broad potentially, they were really often narrow in themselves and constricted in their surroundings; they

## The Pioneer's Contribution to the World

realized that, if broad, they must remain so, and if narrow, expansion could only come through time and their own efforts. Wherever on this continent they started in the race which they were not to finish for centuries, they had no large differences in origin, training, aim, or outlook. Simple in purpose, faith, and life, they did not resent their rude beginnings or seek to dodge their duties and responsibilities. Much of their work, whether early or late, was crude and carried them back for a time to many primal human traits, both good and bad.

Whatever their diversities in opinion or interest, they seemed never to think that it was necessary to settle them in open conflict. Whatever else America was, with all its virtues or faults, it was the seat for more than two hundred years of its history of a domestic peace strangely in contrast with conditions, during the same period, in the countries from which its people had been drawn. If their soil was the seat now and then of conflicts between white men, they were not of their own production or because of a dispute that originated with them. The quarrels were of foreign not home origin. When, working for and with themselves for protection from red men, or for the provision of shelter, food, or clothing, they worked together; the occasional renegade was treated as the common enemy — an outlaw.

They tried to get as far away as possible from the quarrels of Europe, and too often when they were successful they lost touch with the culture and the amenities characteristic of an old society. They soon became en-

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meshed in an economic system, with many of the outgrown traits found in the Jewish Commonwealth; an educational machine little more advanced than the hedge schools of Ireland in the 17th century; a religion narrow, austere, and intolerant; a literature with not a tithe of the breadth or outlook of that in the days even before the glories of the Elizabethan age had burst upon mankind; scorers of music, of the arts, and of rational amusements; and singularly ignorant of even the science then existent. They thus started on their long western journey with advantages the like of which had never been seen among men, and with handicaps that both in number and difficulty would have disheartened any but a people struggling for freedom and room to grow.

The shifting from one place to another, the moving forward and backward, that constant pulling up of sprouts, which has had to be emphasized so often, seems to me, now that I review what I have written, no less than when I recall the life that I have seen or studied, to be the most significant quality of these Pioneer times. Stability and uniformity in an outcome would be about the last things that would be expected; but, after all, they are the conspicuous fruit of all this wandering which so many times appeared to be without end or aim. Human nature has in all America tended to throw off the nomadic tendencies — so strong in the old world where man began his wanderings and has seemed to encounter much difficulty when he sought to abandon them. And yet, this world has never

## Why These Times Are Not Known

gone so far in the attainment of that rigidity, typical of the farther Orient, as to leave society unprogressive.

### WHY THESE TIMES ARE NOT KNOWN

It is in nowise surprising that as a class the Pioneer is imperfectly understood, even by his own descendants — those living upon the same soil and solving what they fondly think inherited problems as well as those distinctively their own. He is still more woefully misunderstood by the men whose training has been received in cities — always the human beings with the narrowest horizons. Why should knowledge of him come within the ken of that vast new population which has crowded itself upon the scene out of due time, long before it had any complete preparation for such a serious task? The Pioneer, collectively, is as distinctly an historic character as the sturdy men and women who, crowding the romantic pages of Hawthorne, have never yet found a historian of their more prosaic phases or the times in which they moved.

It is not that Boone and Robertson and Sevier have been neglected, but that they are beyond comprehension because like the needy knife grinder they refused to recount a story that nobody deemed worthy of the telling. Having something to do that had never been done, and so doing it that it will not have to be done again, eighteenth century men doing their work with tools almost prehistoric, passing away almost like a dream, covered over with a material progress wholly revolutionary, why should they or their immediate successors be understood?

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The Homeric age, mythical though it is thought to be, had more than a chronicler; it was embalmed in deathless poetry. Xenophon's story of the March of the Ten Thousand brings that great performance home to every imagination; the Wanderings of the Jews, their songs and lamentations, their customs, manners, exiles, every feature of their lives through hundreds of years of almost unrelieved bondage and misery make them even to this far-off western world the best known people that has come into modern history, and yet, from a material point of view, they have not left a wrack behind. We know the Saxons and the Danes, who overran England; the Huns, the Goths, and the Vandals who plundered Rome and put all the then existing and future civilization into peril. These movements, culminating after long periods, have left their records imperishably written in all the literary forms that interest humanity.

But the Pioneer from his first appearance until his last scene had been played lasted only from 1769 to the close of the Civil War in 1865 — less than a century. During this time he was buried either in a wilderness or on a trackless prairie. He was carrying on one of the great experiments in human history; but, until it was over nobody knew it. During half this period he sent next to nothing into the world's intellectual and material markets, and drew from them in even less measure. He was his own missionary, so that little more than an echo of his religious life, rigid as it was, reverberated across the intervening mountains. He sent back no political messages,

## Why These Times Are Not Known

kept his own peace, fought his own battles and those of his country, though it knew him not. His isolation was, after all, his greatest strength, his independence his most valued inheritance and possession. A later statesman and jurist, in part one of the products of the Pioneer life, even long after this great area had emerged victorious, asked, "What do we care for abroad?" He was only echoing, parrot-like, the cry that in this mid-western age had gone up not only about Europe and the rest of mankind, but about the country of which it was a distinct part.

Why, then, should the American care before 1830 for what he did not know, or after 1870 for what had passed away and been absorbed in the larger movements, not only in his own country, but in the whole world? The Pioneer in each of his generations was akin to the insect which comes into life, performs the functions decreed by its nature, and then, after a few hours of activity, gives way in due course to a natural successor — the one commanding no more immediate recognition than the other. When the time came for this great achievement to be recorded, events moved so rapidly that nobody was interested either to tell or hear its story.

This neglect has continued because the world, unknowing what had been done for it, or how it was missing a great part of its own proud achievements, has passed by on the other side. The universal subject of talk, of writing, of boast, and even of pride, was progress; yet this episode was so distinctly progressive that it showed something made out of nothing, and that, too, by men and women



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who, being in the world, might otherwise have folded their hands in comfort in fairly settled society and have let the wilderness and the prairie wait. While the loss to mankind would have been large beyond computation, perhaps the average happiness of many of the participating individuals might, from the point of view of the purely cud-chewing animal, have been even greater. So, rather than sit down in what to him would have been inglorious ease he preferred to go out and create, never giving a thought to the question of recognition or of appreciation from the outside, or to anything but doing his duty in the extension to new and unknown areas of the language and religions he had inherited, and the free institutions his ancestors had made and while providing for himself and his family, not in the easiest way, but as his nature led him.

Even over the vast area in which the Pioneer played his so effective part, he is often patronized among his descendants and successors as being, no doubt, very well in his way, but his rough exterior, his aversion to the artificial or conventional, his supposed lack of that mysterious thing called culture, his shrewdness so often confused with cunning, are sometimes subjects for a lecturer's jest or a novelist's cheap sarcasms. The despicable instinct that enters into the making of the parvenu in the city or of the girl ashamed of her mother, or of the grandson who uses his inherited wealth in order to sneer at its maker — these qualities so come out even in the Pioneer area itself, that one of the most pathetic features of life on these wide areas is the practical breakdown of good, sturdy, families

## Some Tendencies of the Time

often not later than the third generation, thus verifying the old saying, worthy to become an aphorism, that it takes less money to spoil an American of the old blood and ancestry than among any other known people. This is applicable not only to the loss of the power of bequeathing ability in the professional and prosperous classes, in many cases not even one generation of these succeeding another; but it explains why farms pass so often and so soon either into the hands of foreigners or depend upon them for the labor or direction necessary to continue in operation.

A discussion of this question would naturally carry me far beyond my fixed period and involve so many considerations verging upon the academic that its study must be left to the sociologists who seem inclined to take all speculation for their function, often, it is to be feared, without any considerable gift for going to the bottom of those issues which must be understood before their science shall become one with fixed principles and rules which, although not yet known, no doubt, exist; but they will not codify themselves by an evolution from fads or assumptions based upon the conclusion that whatever was, was wrong.

### *SOME TENDENCIES OF THE TIME*

IT WOULD seem that a fairly uniform tendency has been at work in all the States within the Pioneer area, and in some of their own offshoots. The rapid flow of population, more akin in many respects to a tidal wave — sudden, destructive, revolutionary — than to a normal movement,

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imports conditions wholly new to any environment and thus interferes with stability, with the preservation of the past, and with that respect for beginnings, so necessary and wholesome. It is not yet clear what is to come, humanly speaking, from the lavishness of nature in providing unfailing plenty—a fact only saved from the marvellous by the demands which severe winters make. It is impossible even to surmise what is to come ethnologically out of a people so diverse in origin, ambition, purpose, and outlook. Speculation about the effect of institutions which, thought to be new, are here under trial on a broader scale than ever before known, is vain in view of the fact that they have, like paragons among children, always failed heretofore to redeem their early promise or, so far as the larger issues of humanity are concerned, have proved to be little more than the baseless fabric of a vision.

It is not possible to foresee, even dimly, what kind of a people will develop on these scenes, what will be the nature of their minds or the strength of their bodies, what will be their politics or associative relations, what arts, or religious, moral, or intellectual gifts they may develop, or even what turn the vast material bounties may take so far as the making of an all-round humanity is concerned. Nothing in history can guide the imagination into a conclusion as to what may or must come upon a high plane like that lying between the Alleghenies and the Rocky Mountains. The migrations and inter-migrations that have been under consideration, affecting a compact area larger

## Some Tendencies of the Time

than any great unified empire now in the world or known to mankind's experience, have only been so proceeding for a scant century and a half that, thus far, this geographic division of the new world is without form and void. It has, indeed, become the home of many millions of people, happy and prosperous outwardly, but with no separate government, ideas, institutions, or character, properly to be called its own. What may or must come in this great walled-in area in three, five, seven, or ten centuries when its population has grown by ten or twenty fold, and when from the development of natural resources not now even so much as suspected, new methods of transportation may make the sea, now so dominant as a force, a mere nothing, something no longer a necessity or perhaps little more than an obstruction to the progress of the two, three, four, or five hundred millions of people who may then occupy this garden spot of the earth's surface?

These conclusions must be taken in their broadest meaning. They naturally exclude Russia — that vast region which has never had a centralized character of its own. All other countries, however great in history or achievement, have been small in area : not one of them comparable to this central plain. It is often forgotten that the so-called great countries of the world are something mainly in the nature of suzerain powers, holding in some kind of authority or subjection, either political or economic, vast masses of men who have all the weaknesses that accompany senility. When this is not the case they are like China not unified countries in any sense at all. The

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only great example that history affords of such mixed aggregations of overlords and dependents is Rome and this cannot be considered encouraging for the permanence of great aggregations under the central direction of an ambitious political power. The world has just had a demonstration in Germany of how fragile is the relation, so far as permanence is concerned, of an attempt to subject distant divisions of mankind to outside domination. It is not improbable that the course of history will show the great plain of North America, occupying what is sometimes called the Mississippi Valley, as the one example of a really solidified people working out its destiny with a unity never before known, and perpetuating itself as a real power, remote from the sea, long after its earlier associates have flown into many fragments like a broken fly-wheel.

Perhaps when the time comes the dreams of the early Pioneers may be realized on a scale far beyond anything that could have entered their roving, untrained fancies. It may be that the ideas and aspirations which they deemed so promising as conceptions and so potent when realized as actualities shall then find such development that their successors will recall them with a force that may mark them as the glory of a new and distant English literature.

While all these remote possibilities may work themselves out, it must be confessed that thus far there is nothing to indicate that the prairie—which through the destruction of the wilderness, the whole of this great central plain has become—is to be the special nursery

## Some Tendencies of the Time

of outstanding character, or a high order of intellectual development. We know what lands bordered by a sea-coast with heavily timbered hinterlands can do from what they have done in historic times. It may be that the loneliness incident to this prairie will be dissipated or moderated by the new elbow-touch incident to immense numbers; the comparative ease of drawing a living from the fecund earth may give leisure; or the growth of varied interests may dispel the monotony of the earlier days and of the present.

If this commanding character can be created from its obscure prairie sources and summoned from a prairie hiding place, it is safe to hope that the overmastering drama, the revealing art, and the great poem, may in due course come to their own. If this land in question has had its record imperfectly written and thus far only in prose, it has still been a fine prose, clear as crystal, resonant as a bell, vigorous as an athlete, agreeable to read, because easily understood reflecting the simple character and life that lay underneath it. It has told a tale of destruction of all of man's enemies who presented themselves, followed by construction and reconstruction, rude indeed but continuous.

Of one thing we may rest assured : the possible beauty that lay hid in this wilderness with its useless forests, its miasmatic swamps, its low sluggish rivers, its absence of commanding heights or waterfalls (all of which served to hide whatever beauty it may have had) can only be brought out by the hand of man. From an attractive or

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picturesque point of view the wilderness was not God's country at all. For the most part, He had hid whatever it had of beautiful features and it has been the most commanding task that man has had to do to bring them out. It has been a great achievement to make the corn and the vine grow where only trees were, but it has been far more difficult gradually to bring out whatever things of beauty these great districts now show.\*

The results of these changes have become obvious. There are now districts in Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky, originally heavily wooded, and in the illimitable prairie in Missouri, Illinois, and Iowa, where the landscape that strikes the eye of the travelled beholder reminds him of familiar districts in England, or occasionally, in France. The rolling hills, with ravine and meadow in about the same proportions as revealed elsewhere on old scenes, the scattered groves, about the same, whatever the original conditions may have been as to timber or its absence, the windmills, the fences or hedges, the droves of cattle, sheep or swine, the barns, the neatness of the houses, many of the features, so far as differences in topography will permit, showing after all, how unoriginal or monotonous nature tends to become when she has been stripped of her figleaf clothing and clad in fashionable garb.

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\* The footsteps of man, in spite of all the nonsense that has been written and said to the contrary, leave behind them beauty and delight. When the forests recede from the valleys, and verdure clothes the hills, and villages are scattered through wastes, North America will become a beautiful and picturesque country. — Elias P. Fordham's *Personal Narrative*, p. 153.

## Final Personal Conclusions

If any American who reads shall have an opportunity in the course of his travels, let him look carefully at the landscape shown by a railway journey in the valley of the Thames after leaving Oxford on his way to London, and, if he has first seen the later home views, in highly cultivated districts, he will have many a reminder of these parts through which he has had occasion to travel in America, and will thus be able to philosophize upon the fact that man in his conquest of the earth tends to make one part assimilate to another. He will be forced to conclude that, in its essentials, where landscape gardening works its way out from nature's rude topography it tends less to the variety which he fondly looks for in cultivated regions than to the sameness which he sometimes deprecates. As has been the case in the old world, it takes a long time to produce the results that reveal beauty. But experience and the tendency to imitate what has already been done produces in the end about the same effects.

### FINAL PERSONAL CONCLUSIONS

IN COMPLETING this labor of love, a work in which I have followed mine own people through a period which marks the culmination of the struggles and triumphs of a hundred years, I have sought to sketch this life, not from frisking marionettes, but from men and women real in all their qualities. I am wholly lacking in that fictive gift of picking out here an angel and there a devil and of putting them into the limelight. It has rather seemed to me that a great human experiment has been carried on with actual



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people who went out into some real, though unknown, land and that this separation from their kind, while attracting into the wilderness all that had justified itself as useful, made the most practical and picturesque human development ever carried on under peaceful auspices and with peaceful intentions.

I have sought to glance hurriedly — considering the size of the area conquered by them and the results attained in such a short time — not at the sequence of historical events recorded within this hundred years, with the mass of effort and achievement behind them, nor yet at the varied topography of its hills and valleys, but at the men and women who made this history and these events. I have not sought to rewrite history, or to cumber the annals which must underlie it, but have aspired to contribute to large, collective biography by indicating the work that had made the final results and to put it into such form that the achievements of a large segment of our people and the spirit behind them would be accorded some measure of recognition.

I hope that I may have been fairly successful in my purpose to reconstruct, not a vast congeries of events, generally repetitious of each other but to show some semblance of the human life illustrated during the culminating generations that lived during the hundred-year period in this great central area. It has almost been within my knowledge, covering as this always does in the observant human being what he has seen by inheritance or in the body but with the larger inheritance from the eye of the

## Final Personal Conclusions

mind which is the greatest blessing conferred upon him by his forebears. It has made its appeal to this imagination of mine as something typical of American and human effort and growth. It has seemed to me to have underneath it a strong and wholesome philosophy — something far more important than anything revealed as a field for adventure and settlement.

Here a people went out not driven by persecution, not as vulgar conquerors, not as marauders, not seeking to reap harvests where others had sown, not as seekers after gold or other speculative treasure. I have constantly kept in mind the thought that this typical district — an example of a larger development on the scale of a nation — was an epitome of the great area which to my mind is to exercise so far-reaching an influence upon the world itself. Nowhere, so far as I can recall (now that the long, though never tedious task is finished) does it seek to bolster up an assumed position either by the unfair use of facts or inferences, or to overlook the place and work of one type of manhood in order to exaggerate those of another. The questions dealt with have seemed to me to be almost so wholly local that the provincialism lying all about it was only redeemed from narrowness by the potentialities apparent at every step, and by the realities that have come almost before the most exacting might ask for them. That these people have grown into a position and consequence never suspected by themselves is only proof that both potentialities and realities were inherent in what might sometimes have been treated as dreams.

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If my study, ragged and imperfect as I know it to be, shall have the effect in any measure of arousing pride in the minds of those who may have been indifferent or without a realizing sense of the high qualities that made their predecessors upon the same scene; if I shall have done anything to rescue, not individuals but a people, from the historic neglect that seems to be an incident even of creative acts; or if any far-seeing man or woman shall be led to study the underlying philosophy of the life whose high points only have been touched, I shall feel that I have my reward.

No study which deals with a question of such magnitude can hope to do it justice; and yet, in spite of this importance, its field must be narrow. It cannot hope to be popular; perhaps if it were it would not have been worth doing because this might have involved a let-down somewhere in the dignity and the character of its appeal; but, whatever its fate I can never repeat, in anything else that I may attempt, the pleasure I have had in working it out during the scant leisure of a busy and exacting life.

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